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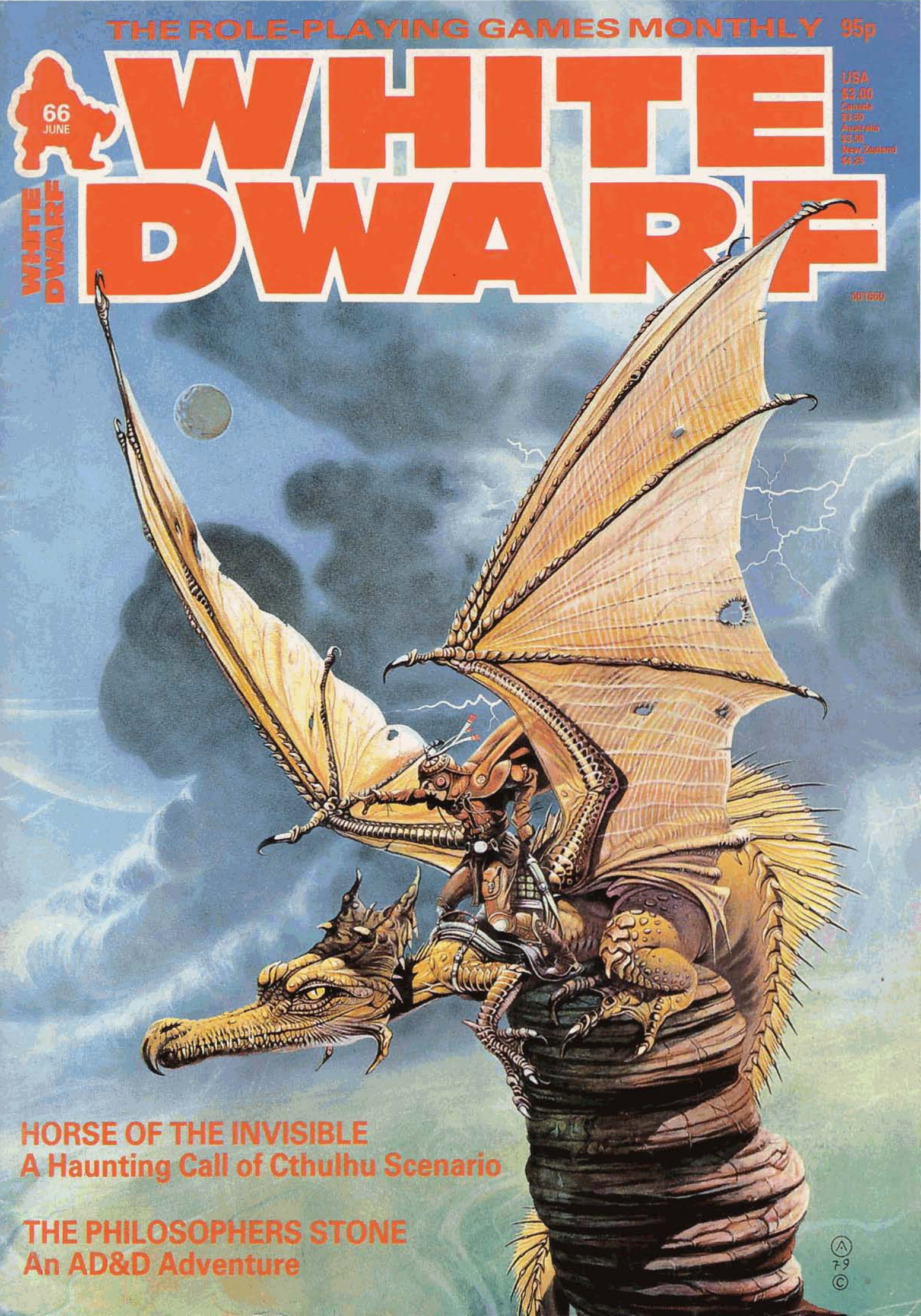

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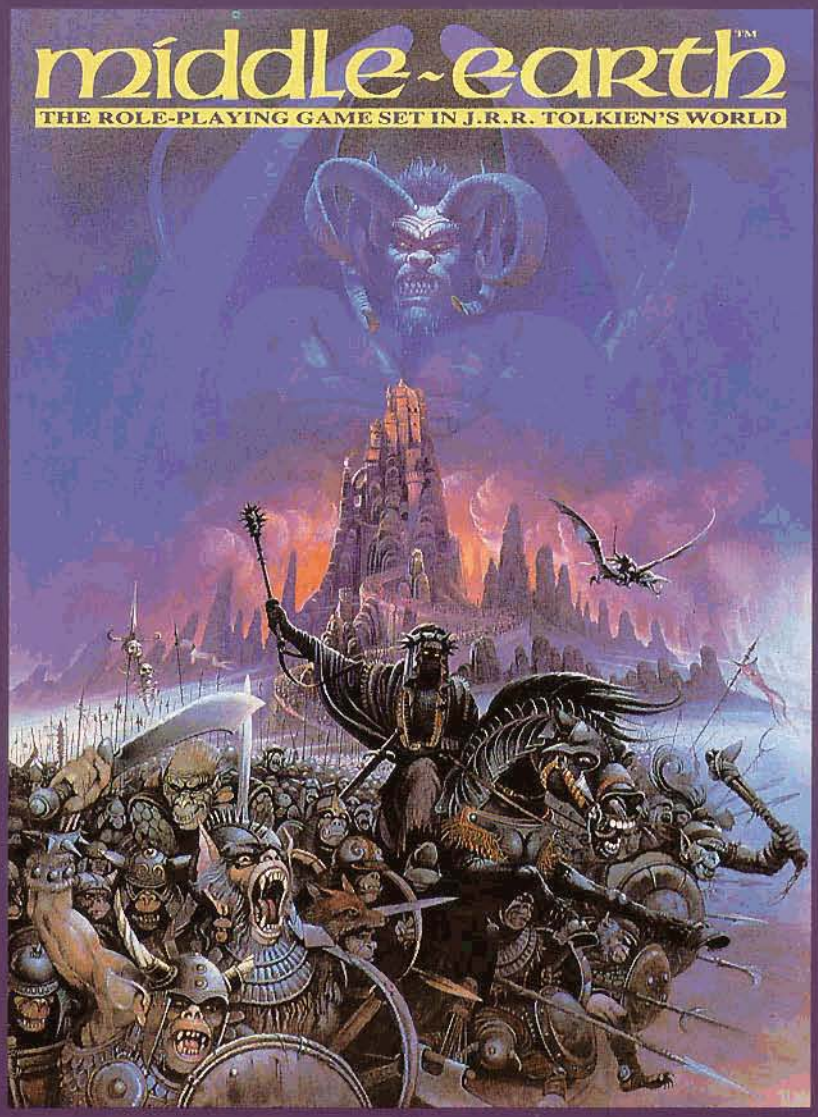


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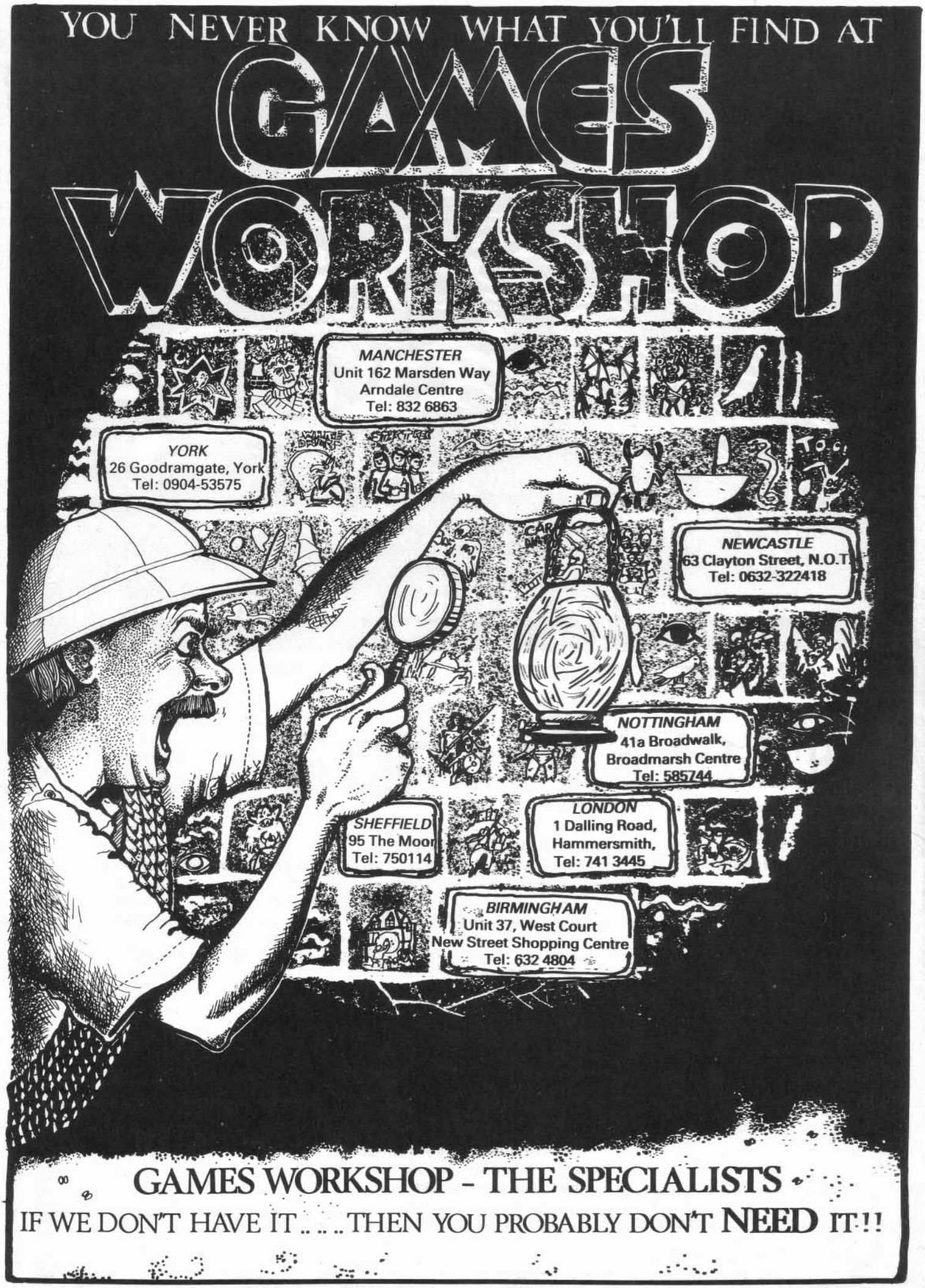
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**Issue 66 June 1985**

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Judging by the number of mass combat fantasy battles, particularly *Warhammer*, being played at Dragonmeet, there is obviously a resurgence of interest in wargaming. However, the popularity of fantasy brought about by *D&D* means that armies are not led by generals but by chaotic goblin warlords and invincible champions. I must admit that vast and colourful armies of *Citadel Miniatures* marching across fantastic landscapes beats drab World War II infantrymen anytime. Wizards, flying creatures and fanatical undead add somewhat to the atmosphere and the rules reflect the excitement. But I wish I could learn not to keep marching my dwarves over invisible pits.

Ian Livingstone

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**Contributions:** The editor will be pleased to consider any previously unpublished articles or artwork for inclusion in *White Dwarf*. Contributions should be typed, double-spaced on one side of the paper only.

*In* Open Box, *science fiction and fantasy games and rulebooks currently in the shops are reviewed by independent authorities.*

# OPEN BOX

**BATTLEDROIDS**
**Wargame**
**FASA** **£16.95**

Take one gimmick, knock up a game system to go with it and put the results into a pretty box. That's been a recipe for quick success in the games industry for some while now; the only problem has been finding an original and interesting gimmick. For this product, *FASA* have picked up on the current popularity of toy plastic robots. Being a great fan of these myself, I was really looking forward to this game.

First impressions were good. Inside the box you get a 32-page rulebook, two (identical) 17×22 inch terrain maps, sheets of terrain symbols and playing pieces, two small do-it-yourself model robots and, pleasantly suprising, a die.

Unfortunately, the two 3" high plastic kits require glue, which is not provided. Although the game is intended for at least two players it works best with a number of robots; only two kits are provided which limits things rather. The counter sheets contain cut-out figures of droids, however, these sheets are of thin paper with the result that the counters blow all over the place at the slightest sneeze and get crumpled quickly. The rulebook suggests you glue the sheets onto cardboard, but such skimping on components is unnecessary and annoying.

So what of the game itself? Well, six pages of the rulebook contain 'background information'. This is just the sort of thing that is sadly missing from many role-playing games, although it adds nothing to what is fundamentally a one-off wargame.

The rest of the rules are split into four parts – the Basic and Advanced games, Expert and Optional rules. The rules are well written and clearly explained – perhaps too clearly. It can be a little irritating being told how to roll two dice!

The Basic game introduces the elementary rules and concepts fairly painlessly. The Advanced game brings in the important additions of heat build-up and droid record sheets.

Heat build-up occurs as a result of strenuous activity and can be offset by heat sinks on the droid's surface. When the internal temperature gets too high the droid begins to suffer; this affects movement and combat capabilities, and if the heat level gets too high the droid needs to shut down or risk having its ammunition explode!

The record sheets are used to keep track of a droid's status, damage, weaponry, etc. The rulebook contains statistics for ten standard types of droid all having different characteristics.

The Expert game introduces still more rules, including critical hits. Finally we have the Optional rules, all of which should really be used. These include rules for clearing woods, starting fires (intentionally or otherwise!) as well as the intriguing prospect of using bits of other droids as clubs! Also included, somewhat predictably, are rules for designing your own droids using the record sheets.

Overall, this is a well-written, easy-to-understand set of rules. Much of the design is clearly specific to robot combat and succeeds in capturing the flavour of this sort of battle. As it stands, *Battledroids* is a very good robot combat system, but very little in terms of a 'game'. The production quality leads one to expect more.

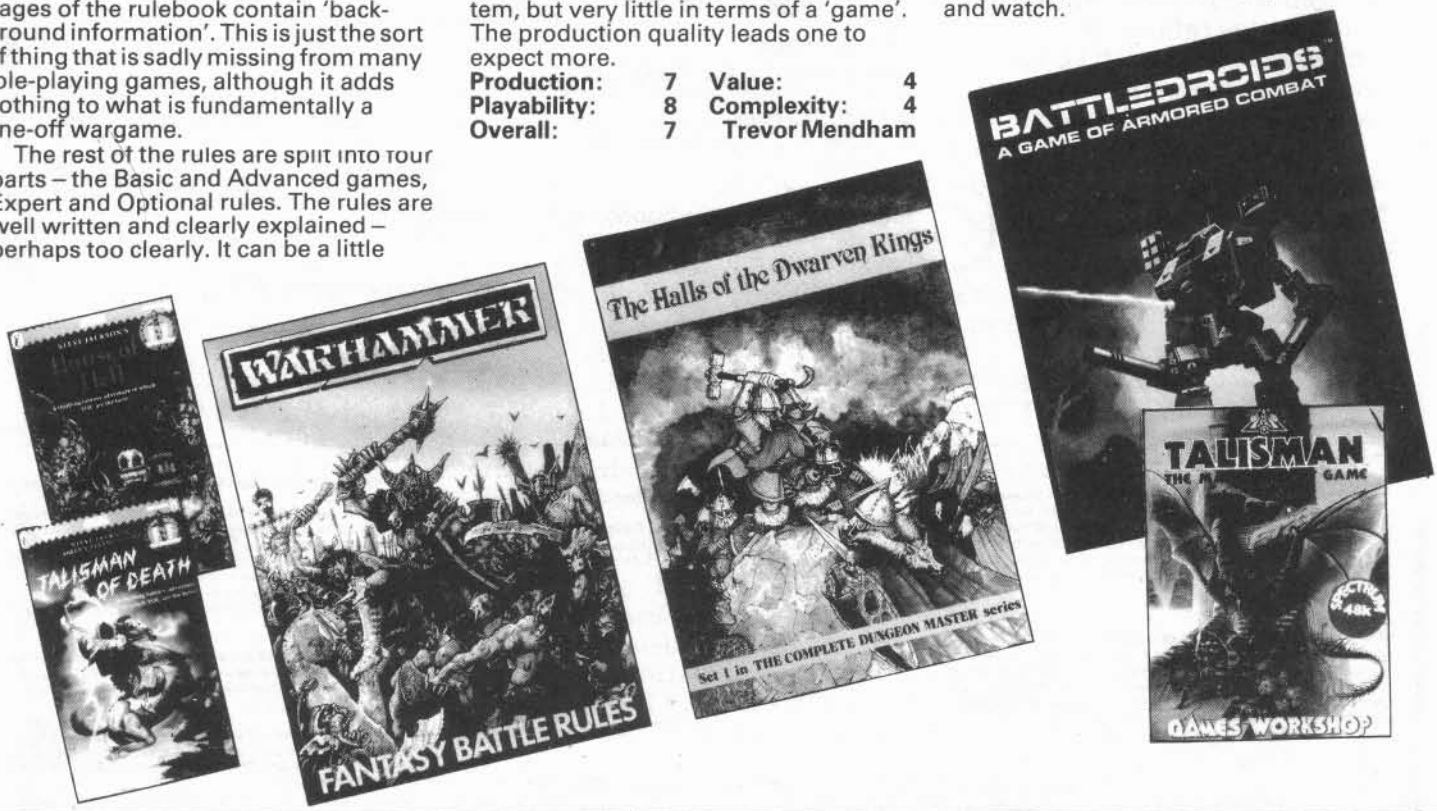
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Production:** | 7 | **Value:** | 4 |
| **Playability:** | 8 | **Complexity:** | 4 |
| **Overall:** | 7 | **Trevor Mendham** | |

**TALISMAN**
**Computer Game**
**Games Workshop Ltd** **£7.95**

*Talisman* is *Games Workshop's* version for the *48K Spectrum* of the boardgame of the same name. Whilst many of the readers of *White Dwarf* will be familiar with the original, most of the purchasers will not, so it is with them in mind that this review is being written.

The game is for one to four players, each of which can either be a human player or controlled independently by the computer. The characters can be one of ten types, including Warrior, Wizard, Ghoul, etc. These vary in their initial requisites: these are Strength (physical fighting power), Craft (magical fighting power), Lives, and Gold. It is also possible to obtain various spells (of which there are 14), some of which can be cast on other players, some on creatures and some on yourself. The game can be played at one of three speeds, appropriately called 'Laid Back', 'Moderate' and 'Speedy'.

It's at this point that the major flaw with *Talisman* shows itself – the instructions. Up to this stage they are clearly laid out and take you through the initial process very well. But from here on they are skimpy in the extreme and it is up to the player to find out what to do rather than be told in the instructions: you are not even told explicitly the objective of the game. There are some narrative-style comments about a hidden source of power which you need the Talisman to reach, so one presumes the objective is to be the first to do so. Once the game commences, the players take turns to move their character about between various locations on the playing board. A picture of the location is drawn at the top of the screen and underneath are shown the objects and characters also present. These are very well drawn and make the game very pleasurable simply to sit back and watch.



Each player has a certain amount of time – indicated graphically by an hourglass – in which to wander around exploring the locations. At the end of this time he must stop and have an 'encounter' in the area he occupies. This encounter may be a random event – either pleasant or otherwise(!) – or a fight with a creature.

Fights may either take place with Strength or Craft. Against another player, you may choose which of these to use, but against a creature you have no option. If the player loses, he loses one of his lives – when these are all gone he is out of the game. If he wins, the creature is removed from the game and he may pick up any items and followers in the area.

Although objects and followers are mentioned and the possible variations listed, their actual function is not explained. Most add to Strength or Craft, which can be ascertained from the screen display, but some of the other effects are less obvious. Also it is not always obvious what some of the graphics represent. The instruction book contains pretty pictures of Pixies, Crowns, etc, but these bear no relation to the graphics used in the program. It might have been better to use the space to show the items in the manner which they appear on the screen.

The 'board' has two main sections, and movement from one to the other is usually possible only when you have sufficient Strength, Craft or Money. It is then possible to embark on a series of 'tests', which again require lots of followers and items for you to pass through alive. If you do succeed, you obtain The Crown of Creation and win the game.

Overall, the presentation of *Talisman* is excellent and the graphics make it a pleasure to play. It will certainly appeal to *Talisman* fans lacking opponents, as the computer makes a very reasonable job of this.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Programming:** | **8** | **Fun:** | **7** |
| **Graphics:** | **9** | **Instructions:** | **3** |
| **Skill:** | **3** | **Overall:** | **7** |

**Trevor Mendham**

---

**THE HALLS OF THE DWARVEN KINGS**
**RPG Play-Aid**
**Integrated Games** **£7.95**

This weighty new play-aid is the first in *The Complete Dungeon Master* series by *Integrated Games*. It is a joint effort of *Beast Enterprises* (better known for their *Tortured Souls* magazine) and Alan Hickling, designer and owner of *Endless Games*.

Physically *Halls* consists of a 24-page scenario, 10 scenic illustrations on photograph quality paper, a three piece dungeonmaster's screen, 12 sheets of A4 floor plans, four pages of cut-out maps, scrolls, etc, and four large cards of NPC statistics.

The closest description of this product one can offer is that it is similar to *GW's Dungeon Planner* series. Component quality is slightly lower, but it is here that the comparisons end. *Halls* represents a new concept in gaming, everything for the harassed DM is done, all cross-referenced, illustrated and explained.

Although they carefully do not mention any specific game system in the text, it is obviously designed with *AD&D* and *RuneQuest* in mind (just have a look at the stats).

The floor plans are of the standard *Endless Plans* type, and are a marked improvement on Alan Hickling's earlier efforts. Useful though they are the 'scenic illustrations' are not up to normal artwork status, the incidental drawings are, by and large, better.

Most useful are the DM's screens which have miniaturised floor plans on them with an 'at a glance' key, but the real bonus are the cut-out maps, scrolls and artifacts.

*Halls of the Dwarven Kings* is perfect as an illustration of how to set up an adventure; the DM need only read the background and then the characters can begin. This is the first of a new series and promises to be a worthwhile addition to any DM's armoury of adventures.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Ease of Use:** | **6** | **Production:** | **6** |
| **Value:** | **7** | **Usefulness:** | **10** |
| **Overall:** | **8** | | |

**B Y Rowe**

---

**HOUSE OF HELL**
**TALISMAN OF DEATH**
**Gamebooks**
**Puffin** **£1.75**

These are the two latest additions to the popular *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks range. In format they are identical to the others. Each book consists of a 25-page guide to the rules, a short background section, and the adventure – which runs to 400 paragraphs – making up the 250 pages.

*House of Hell* is slightly different from the other *FF* gamebooks. It is set in the modern day and the character's car breaks down in a howling storm. He seeks refuge for the night in the Earl of Drumer's mansion. The character senses a feeling of evil, and determines to escape from the house. Leaving the bedroom, he will encounter many manifestations of his fears; hunchbacks, devil worshippers etc. The most common form of death is being 'frightened to death'. This is the extra which Steve Jackson slips into his books in one form or another. At the beginning, an initial 'Fear' total is determined. Instead of subtracting from the total, the character starts at zero, and the 'Fear' points are added; when you reach the total you have been frightened to death.

*Talisman of Death* also has a special feature, and two new writers. The book has been created by Jamie Thomson (ex-*White Dwarf*) and Mark Smith. The scene is set when the character is transported from Allansia, to the gods' plane above Orb. He must prevent a fatal upset in the balance of nature. The character protests . . . but alas too late. He is transferred to Orb to encounter a shield-maiden, a paladin and a priest. He is told that the Talisman is Death's key to enter Orb. If he is summoned all life will cease on the world. To stop the Talisman being used, the character must find the time portal back to his own dimension taking it with him.

The special feature is that if the character is killed, he is resurrected by the gods and returned to the beginning. The idea wears off after two or three reincarnations.

The artwork in both books are of very good quality, the price is reasonable. These are two worthy additions to the collection, and I hope to see more of Jamie Thomson's and Mark Smith's work soon.

| | House of Hell | Talisman of Death |
|---|---|---|
| **Overall:** | **9** | **9** |

**Chris Mitchell**

---

**WARHAMMER (2nd Edition)**
**Wargame Rules**
**Citadel Miniatures** **£9.95**

Physically, *Warhammer II* is a vast improvement upon the original, with three sizeable rulebooks sporting full-colour John Blanche artwork. Also included are colour cut-out figures to use in the Magnificent Sven scenario (a twelve page pull-out in the Battle Magic book), and a very useful ready reference chart and order sheet.

The rules themselves run to 150 pages, split between the Combat, Battle Magic and Battle Bestiary books. Essentially there are few changes from the first edition, however, certain major clarifications and expansions now included serve to make the new version somewhat indispensable. Notable additions are uses and effects of standards and musicians, and new rules for flying, fortifications, fire, artillery, chariots, reserve units, specialist magic-users, points system and poisons. All of the characteristics of characters and monsters are now numerical rather than the odd mixture of letters and numbers previously in force.

The three volumes are profusely illustrated with some very useful diagrams explaining how certain of the rules involving manoeuvring actually work. The photographs of scenery look like they were cut out of a 1960's Donald Featherstone book, but luckily the poor quality of these are an exception rather than a rule.

The development of 'The Known World' provides a useful anchorage for the wide variety of creatures and cultures. The world is based on our own with certain modifications, rather reminiscent of an old *FGU* set of rules, *Archworld*. Aztecs have become Slann, and the far east is called Cathay: viking types, arabs, and the Old World all have roughly historical backgrounds and troops.

*Warhammer II* is a predictable expansion of the original, although it has not ironed out all the problems; personally I do not like throwing a bucket full of dice to cause casualties and then find that your opponent gets most of them back with a saving throw. However, *Warhammer* does remain the only viable set of fantasy mass battle rules; the continued flippant attitude of the mainstream historical wargame establishment to fantasy gaming has made this so.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Complexity:** | **6** | **Production:** | **6** |
| **Ease of Use:** | **7** | **Value:** | **8** |
| **Overall:** | **8** | | |

**Robert Alcock**

Critical Mass *is a regular fantasy and science fiction book review column by Dave Langford, now in hiding from . . .*

# THE FANTASY EXPLOSION

SF is my true love, what with my degree in physics and former nuclear research job. Fie on fantasy: for me the highest literary values consist of megalomaniac computers, hyperspatial leaps and colliding black holes. Hence the need for Alka-Seltzer when, as this month, the fantasies are consistently better than the SF. Subversive, I call it.

Geoff Ryman's first novel *The Warrior Who Carried Life* [*Unwin* 173pp £7.95, horrible binding] crackles like an unshielded power line with energy and originality. The disfigured heroine Cara learns witchery, becoming a man to wreak revenge on the noxious Galu; success fails since the Galu turn defeat to victory through their stomach-turning mystery of the Secret Rose. New ideas keep coming: strange warriors like the Men who have been Baked or Men who Advance like Spiders; the atrocious fate of Cara's family, riddled with actually quite sympathetic worms; a nastily understated Land of the Dead; a Genesis rewrite providing cosmic rationale for the plot; we're barely halfway. For the climax Ryman goes for broke; a sad and gentle coda saves his theme from the common fault of being too big to care about. There are glitches (the appalling poetry of the Secret Rose crashes to earth when verbalized as 'Humanity was in danger of being replaced'), but Ryman is an author to watch.

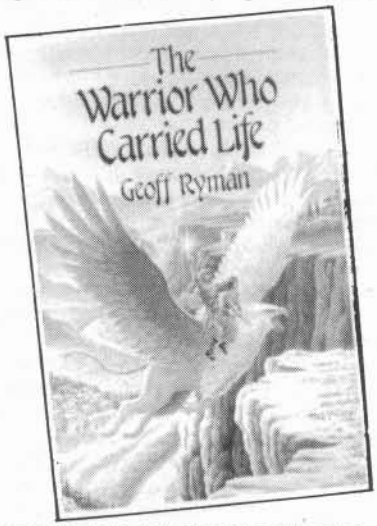
Piers Anthony I've watched despairingly, as he hammers ideas into the ground and decks competent prose with archness and cuteness. *On a Pale Horse* [*Granada* 352pp £2.50] is his best for years, first in the five-book 'Incarnations of Immortality'. The five 'incarnations' (Death, Time, Fate, War, Nature) are spiritual Permanent Civil Servants, policing a world theoretically dominated by God and the disloyal Opposition. This volume's hero is newly appointed Death, learning the ropes ('Yes, Minister') and worrying like other Anthony heroes about the morality of it all. One reason why this book works: matters of life and death *deserve* such agonizing – the Xanth books waste it on white lies or table manners. Another reason: the mechanics of magic and the after-life are fresh and inventive – whereas Xanth has been worn smooth. Not great literature, but good fun.

R A MacAvoy's *Damiano* [*Bantam* 243pp £1.95] opens a trilogy of gentler, more conventional fantasy (you can tell it's conventional – Anne McCaffrey and Andre Norton rave about it). Damiano is an unworldly, lute-playing alchemist of Renaissance Italy, on speaking terms with his dog and the archangel Raphael. When war touches his home town, he bumbles on an impossible quest to preserve it in peace, even by dealing with the devil. MacAvoy has a neat touch with small magics and period detail, and writes with charm – which could be a problem for her if, as some reviewers of the sequels have suggested, it slips into saccharine and disneyfication. I hope not.

*A Box of Nothing* [*Gollancz* 128pp £5.95] is eccentricity from Peter Dickinson: a 'junior' novel which is almost an allegory of science – specifically, cosmology. Having acquired a box of 'the original nothing which was there before the universe began', the young protagonist moves to bizarre adventures in a petrified otherworld, an entropy dump. Its most engaging inhabitant is the Burra, a collective organizing principle which animates miscellaneous junk: 'Our first voice came from a dolly and said 'Mama' and 'Papa'. This one came from a video game.' Somewhere in the entropic desert a new universe is gestating, and there's a race to ensure it's the *right kind* of universe . . . Amiable and batty.

Quick reissue plug: G K Chesterton's *The Ball and the Cross* [*Boydell Press* 403pp £3.95]. Theological fantasy, picaresque adventure; huge fun to read; see where C S Lewis pinched bits for the inferior *That Hideous Strength*; buy this or your toes will drop off.

*The Seventh Gate* by Geraldine Harris [*Unicorn* 243pp £2.95], concludes her 'Seven Citadels' tetralogy. Harris improves throughout: here we get thoughtful word-bandying with one of




the genre's rare *intelligent* barbarian chieftains (escaped only by understanding his sole blind spot), rather too much cross-continent trekking, and a double-punch finale which fails to surprise you with the identity of the Saviour our hero's been questing for, but then goes one better – pushing fantasy clichés beyond their limits into a kind of realism. Nifty stuff.

What does SF offer? Reissues and grot, mainly: the best of the grot is in Neil Gaiman's and Kim Newman's lovingly compiled *Ghastly Beyond Belief: The SF and Fantasy Book of Quotations* [*Arrow* 344pp £2.50]. Thrill to golden prose which spatters your enraptured forebrain across the ceiling! Enjoy the greatest lines of the immortal Lionel Fanthorpe – 'What the devil could it be? he asked himself over and over again . . . He drew closer, and closer still. Then he recognized the peculiar gleaming object for what it was – a door handle!' Or, as we scientists say in films: 'Mad? I, who have discovered the secret of life! You call me mad?!' This book fills a much needed gap.

'Remember when humans were heroes, androids didn't have social hang-ups and the only good alien was a dead one?' Not *Ghastly Beyond Belief*, but the slogan of *Hamlyn's* 'Venture SF' series . . . Birmingham's Andromeda Bookshop has long complained that publishers don't package SF to sell: Andromeda is editing these 'the right way', numbered for collectors, with identikit Eddie Jones jackets and an 'action adventure' policy. No 1 is *We All Died at Breakway Station* by Richard C Meredith [*244pp* £1.95]; no 2, *Come, Hunt an Earthman* by Philip E High [176pp £1.75]. Both are pretty bloodthirsty – 'She turned on the laser scalpel and slowly lowered it towards his loins' (Meredith, opened at random). High's has the standard High plot of totally downtrodden but gutsy Earthmen resisting omnipotent aliens' machinations and rising to rule the galaxy: at least two High books handle this theme – such as it is – much better, while his punctuation still hasn't had the copyediting it desperately needs. Not the most promising of starts . . .

Even a series which opened promisingly, like E C Tubb's *Dumarest*, can wear thin after a dozen books. *The Terra Data* [*Arrow* 172pp £1.95] is no 22, and besides many rotten sentences has a plot resembling the previous ones: hero Dumarest, tepidly pursued by omniscient yet inept Cybers, fights through unconquerable barriers of padding to obtain the secret whereabouts of lost Earth, only to suffer his 22nd failure. Soporific.

*The Fungus* by Harry Adam Knight [*Star* 220pp £1.95] is a horror nasty veneered with scientific rationalization for a dreaded cross between dry rot and athlete's foot, which causes people's favourite parts to suffer spongy outgrowths or fall off – as when a rapist's fungus-riddled organ snaps at the crucial moment. Truly revolting. Even the authors are ashamed, and skulk behind a pseudonym.

In brief: Asimov's *The Robots of Dawn* [*Granada* 477pp £2.50] conceals, beneath layers of flab and theses on the philosophy of toilets, a little SF/detective tale: oh for an editor! Ballard's *Vermilion Sands* [*Dent* 208pp £2.95]: now beautifully packaged, nine stories of the world's weirdest resort and artistic colony – haunting, poetic, more accessible than some Ballard. Frank Herbert's *Destination: Void* [*Penguin* 219pp £1.95]: doomed spacegoers struggle to invent plot-saving artificial intelligence – tense and gritty, with an all-time corny punchline. *The Survivors* by Marion Zimmer Bradley and Paul Edwin Zimmer [*Arrow* 238pp £1.95] follows their *Hunters of the Red Moon* – promises of interesting character conflict regularly sabotaged by the appearance of a Ravenous Bugblatter Beast and much consequent swordplay. Banal. (Falls insensible, twitching spasmodically in effort not to think of the just-arrived *Helliconia Winter* . . . ) □

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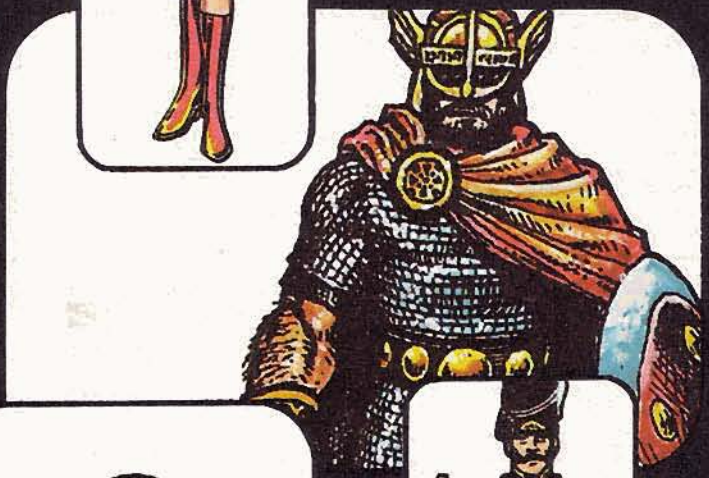

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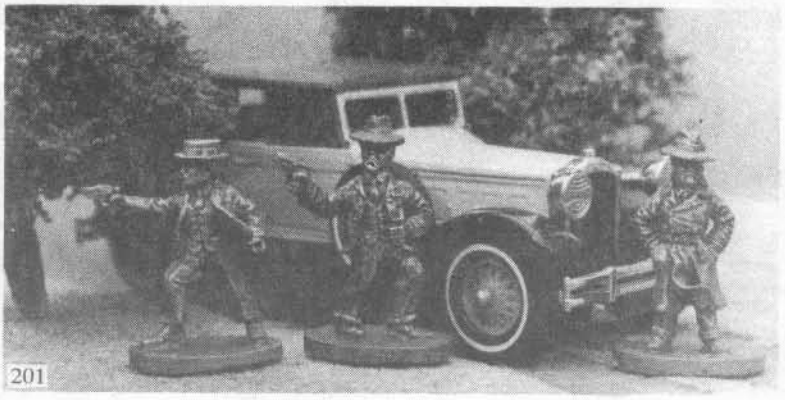


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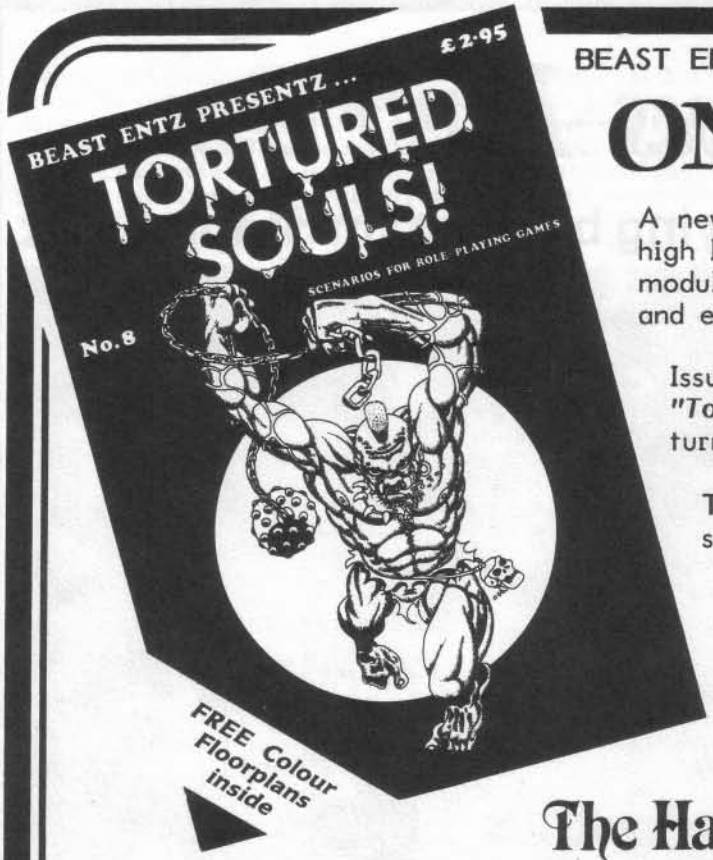


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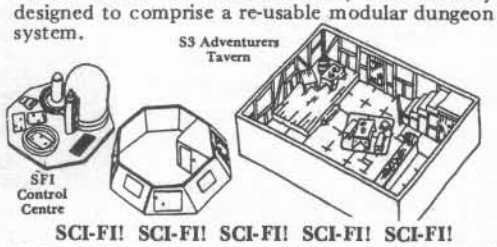


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# The Road Goes Ever On

## Inside Middle Earth Role-Playing by Graham Staplehurst

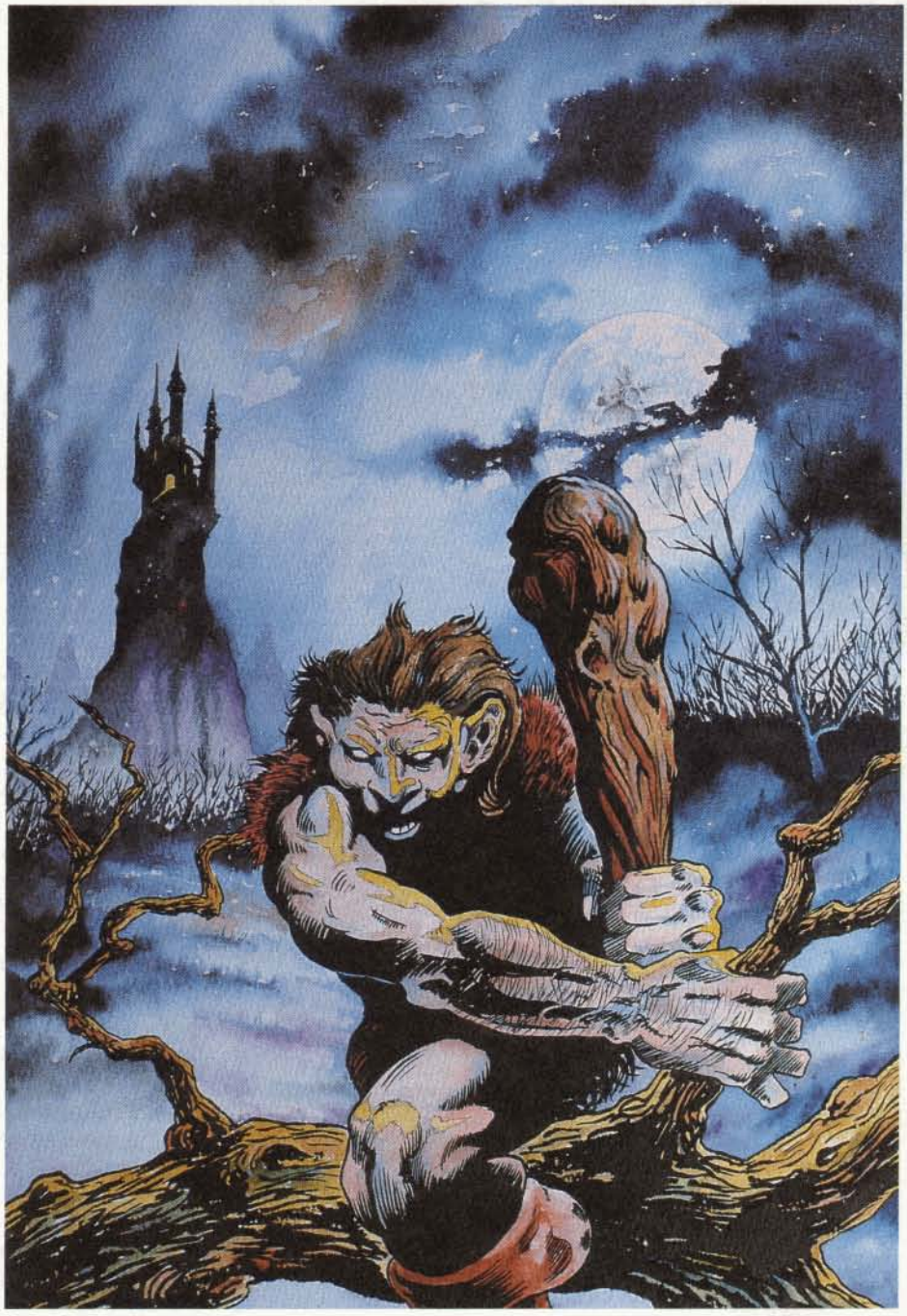
J R R Tolkien invented a fantasy world which has long held a special fascination for me. I was enchanted from the time I first read *The Lord of the Rings*. If you have read Tolkien's works, you may well have experienced the same enjoyment, and when *Iron Crown* brought out *Middle Earth Role-Playing* to continue the story, I wondered just how good it could be. Tolkien laid his own ground rules for fantasy and I think that they are as relevant to any fantasy game based on Middle Earth as they were to the books themselves. Paul Kocher commented on these rules:

*"In 1938 when Tolkien was starting to write* The Lord of the Rings *he also delivered a lecture at the University of St Andrews in which he offered his views on the types of world that it is the office of fantasy to 'sub-create'. Fantasy's worlds must possess, he said, not only 'internal consistency' but also 'strangeness and wonder' arising from their 'freedom from the domination of observed fact'. He added that a fantasy world must be 'credible, commanding Secondary Belief'."*

So how does *Middle Earth Role-Playing* measure up against Tolkien's own standards, and how can we use it to 'get inside' Middle Earth?

One of the major criticisms of any fantasy based on known works is simply that too much is known by the players and that the GM and his imagination is limited to the published facts. In Tolkien one might think that this is truer than ever, as there is so much more known about his world. And yet the scope of the world is so vast that there is room for enormous expansion and a huge variety of settings: from the Sunless Years before the Sun rose in the sky, when Middle Earth was full of wild beasts and dangers lurking in the shadows, to the ascent of Man in the Fourth Age and the departure of the elves for good to the Blessed Realm. Then there are times of peace and war, there are countries of freezing cold and of burning heat, there are forests and rivers and mountains and lakes. *ICE* have not attempted to tie anyone down on the when or the where of the game. Having read as much Tolkien as you can beforehand, you will be itching to play, and will probably have many problems just thinking where to start.

However, *ICE* have decided in their modules to develop one time period more than others, so that players wanting a campaign setting in depth can see one ready-made. The era chosen is the troubled 17th Century Third Age. The choice is a good one: it is a time of stress and yet also balance, of evil influence and yet not open aggression or war. Sauron is apparently dead and almost forgotten by men, but there are the new evils of Angmar and the Necromancer. The One Ring is lost and will not be found again for several hundred years.



*Iron Crown* have done superb development work on areas that Tokien neglected or left unspecified. They have mapped out the extent of Endor, the 'Middle Earth' of Arda, spreading it far to the east and south, and give details of the areas they cover in their modules for all Ages of Middle Earth. Whenever and wherever you choose to set your adventures you are almost bound to be able to find some reference to it in Tolkien's works and can be sure that *ICE* will be producing a detailed module of it before long.

The supreme benefit of this game is surely the setting and the wealth of inherited material it rests on. So what of the game itself – the system? I found it an eminently suitable one, though not spectacularly original. It relies mainly on the *Rolemaster* system devised by *ICE* before they produced this game, and it is to a large extent just a simplification of it. One is confronted with this fact rather abruptly on first reading through a *MERP* module: the modules are all written directly for *Rolemaster* and have not been 'translated' into *MERP*. This seems a little strange as, for example, characters in *Rolemaster* and *MERP* do not have the same stats!

However, the *MERP* system stands up quite nicely on its own in almost every respect. It has a simple character 'class'

system, with detailed notes on background for different races and sub-races (for example, three sorts of elves and fifteen sorts of men). There is a skill system which allows all classes to learn any skill (just about, anyway), with a varying cost in terms of initial points (which the characters start with) and extras gained by experience in the *AD&D* manner. This kind of informal 'channelling' of a character's skills into certain areas still leaves the option of diverting them into the unusual areas, which is to be greatly appreciated over the straightjacket of *AD&D*, and yet is not so all-encompassing as *RuneQuest*.

The combat system can be rather bloody, which is no bad thing. *AD&D* players will probably come to grief the first time they meet orcs, as these are the real thing! Players give their characters skills in different weapon types and in defensive manoeuvres and the combat resolution system gives a chance to hit and damage all in one roll, as well as allowing an opportunity for the player to exercise skill in assigning the character's attacking bonus. All manner of attack modes and critical hits are accounted for in the tables, the extra requiring an additional roll of D100.

The only facet of the *MERP* system I would quarrel with is the magic system. In Tolkien's world, magic was a very rare thing when one considers it in the form of lightning bolt and fireball. Magic was present, but as a subtle and inherent quality of many things and people. Dwarfen and elven smiths, for example, might work magic into their creations. The healers of Lothlorien and Minas Tirith knew the powers of herbs and the potency of Athelas. The Kings of Gondor and Arnor used their palantiri or 'seeing-stones' to keep an eye on each other and their kingdoms. But there are very few examples of spell-casting, particularly in an offensive manner, and those who could do it were exceptionally powerful, like Gandalf. The *MERP* system gives these sorts of powers to almost anyone after the acquisition of relatively few experience points; for me, it upsets the flavour of the game and its authenticity.

The parameters imposed by Tolkien's world means that fortunately there are not endless hordes of monsters to inflict on the players and therefore a GM will have to provide a little more thought when designing scenarios and encounters. There are many ideas in his works and those of the *ICE* design team, and I hope that players and GMs will utilise to the full Tolkien's superb characterisations of the many hundreds of men, elves and dwarfs, not to mention hobbits! If you have a need for monsters of a nastier kind then there are details of orcs, trolls and Nazgûl plus many others besides, and each of the modules has sections dealing with local flora and fauna, so that the depth of colour always provided by Tolkien is continued in the game. *ICE* provide a useful little scenario in the back of the rules booklet and *Games Workshop* have thoughtfully added to this by including 25mm floor plans for the adventure in the boxed version, along with cardboard figures for characters. These are of a lot better quality than some of the offerings in recent *TSR* modules.

I said earlier that the game rested firmly on Tolkien's works. Obviously a good working knowledge of these will be a great asset for helping you to play the game, but you don't have to try and read it all at once! Most people know *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of The Rings* and these two are really quite essential to try and start playing. However, books like *The Silmarillion* and *Unfinished Tales* are rather an acquired taste and not easily read. I would suggest that the one other book to have on hand (if you need anything other than appendices in *The Lord of the Rings* and the information in *MERP* itself) would be J E A Tyler's *The New Tolkien Companion*. This will not only help you with keeping track of legendary people and places, it is also useful to browse through and get ideas for scenarios.

Getting ideas for scenarios may not sound too hard, and if you can afford to buy lots of the campaign and scenario modules then you will be well set up. However, getting the game started can be a bit harder and so here are a few hints. If you are a complete novice to role-playing games and have just bought (or are thinking of buying) *MERP* then, as I've said, there is a lot to sort out. I would suggest that your GM runs a few simple adventures in which you try out as many different rules as possible. Choose your characters carefully so that the party has a reason for being together, and choose a time and place that fits. Although you might start off as bewildered as Bilbo as he was bustled out of his front door by Gandalf one morning, you will learn quickly as he did! Once you've settled into the way that the game works, you can start to take more notice of the wide world around you and wonder what is happening out there – and you should be doing something about it.

The *ICE* modules are excellently produced and contain a wealth of detail for the *MERP* enthusiast. As mentioned earlier, the modules are all written using *Rolemaster* stats and these are not entirely compatible with *MERP*, so some work is necessary before using them, but all are worth the effort. The first, *Angmar*, deals with the area in the north of the Misty Mountains and adjacent to the ancient kingdom of Rhudaur, now thrown down and controlled by the Witch-King. The module is perhaps a little less professionally produced that those that followed, but it is imaginable that *ICE* were still finding their feet and one could anticipate this module being revised to fit the standard format they now use.

The second and third form a pair: *North* and *South Mirkwood*, once Greenwood the Great. The lurking menaces of the forest make it an ideal setting for adventures and there are many ideas to be found in the provocative descriptions given here. Like all the other modules these have full colour pull-out maps which join to one another to form a vast mosaic of Middle Earth. These maps and the text are rife with detail and explanations, and contain many hidden secrets for players to discover.

To the south-west of Mirkwood lies Calenardhon, the land that is now called Rohan. A module covers all this under the aegis of *Isengard*, and though as long as the others, refers to only half the land area. The land is detailed specifically for the time after the Great Plague in the 17th century when the noble land of Gondor is split by the Kin-Strife, but also has general outlines for all times. All these modules have a good theme and they have been allowed to expand upon the bones provided by Tolkien in a work that must have been a labour of love – and one that makes me quite envious. Other modules include *Umbar*, the treacherous harbour of Corsairs of Black Numenorean descent; and the *Court of Ardor*, a realm far removed from north-west Middle Earth where all of Tolkien's stories occur.

In addition to the modules there are now shorter scenario packs, including the *Barrow Downs*, the *Trollshaws*, the *Dead Marshes* and *Cirith Ungol*. I have not had occasion to use these overmuch, and generally like to think of my own detailed scenarios and adventures against the backdrop provided by the campaign modules. However, they would appear useful to the novice GM who has little experience of how to start up an adventure.

For more experienced GMs, *MERP* carries a feel with it of atmosphere and style in much in the same way as *Call of Cthulhu*. The game and the players should have a long term view of things and the GM should ensure that events keep happening around them so that attention to the environment and society must be paid. Campaigns may develop into either naturally rambling adventures or large-scale quests. You should really milk the game for every advantage it has over general rolegames like *AD&D*, and refer to the known history of Middle Earth to supply the background. *MERP* supplies systems which are more than adequate in lending 'feel' to the game in almost every aspect and which, though perhaps not ideal for completely novice gamers, are certainly easy to assimilate in small doses.

Middle Earth is something that every lover of fantasy is familiar with to some degree and it provides a better base on which to build than many other rolegames have. *MERP* can be used to recreate the great adventures of which Tolkien wrote: going with Frodo or Bilbo or Beren into the lair of evil and trying to escape alive; and it can go some way to fulfilling the desires of people who want to know more about Tolkien's world. *ICE's* plans for expansion both within and around Middle Earth mean that for us, the players, the Road truly will Go Ever On. □

**Bibliograpy and Sources of Inspiration**


| | |
|---|---|
| J R R Tolkien | *The Hobbit* |
| | *The Lord of the Rings* |
| | *The Silmarillion* |
| | *Unfinished Tales* |
| | *Lost Tales I* and *II* |
| Paul Kocher | *Master of Middle Earth, The Achievement of J R R Tolkien* |
| J A E Tyler | *The New Tolkien Companion* |
| Barbara Strachey | *Journeys of Frodo, An Atlas of The Lord of the Rings* |

# THRUD THE BARBARIAN IN THRUD THE DESTROYER

## Part Four

THRUD HAS BEEN ENLISTED AS A MERCENARY BY A GROUP OF VILLAGERS WHO HAVE BEEN ATTACKED BY AN EVIL TYRANT KNOWN AS 'THE BLACK CURRANT.' AFTER BEING INTRODUCED TO HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE THEY HAVE SET OFF ON THEIR TASK... MEANWHILE IN THE BLACK CURRANT'S CASTLE....

WELCOME BACK MY LIEGE! A GOOD DAYS RAPE AND PILLAGE I TRUST?

I HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS CONCERNING MY EXPERIMENTS - IF YOU WOULD CARE TO FOLLOW ME...

REGULAR READERS MAY RECOGNISE THIS SINISTER FIGURE AS THE EVIL NECROMANCER TO-ME KU-PA (WELL YOU DIDN'T REALLY THINK HE WAS KILLED IN THAT EXPLOSION DID YOU?)

AS YOU KNOW YOUR EVILNESS, PREVIOUSLY MY EXPERIMENTS HAVE BEEN LIMITED TO THE TRANSPORTATION OF A SINGLE INANIMATE OBJECT THROUGH TIME...

...THAT IS, UNTIL NOW. HOWEVER, THANKS TO YOUR GENEROUS FINANCIAL SUPPORT MY EXPERIMENTS HAVE REACHED FRUITION — BEHOLD!

...THE ESSENCE OF EVIL IN HUMAN FORM FROM THROUGHOUT TIME - WITH A FORCE SUCH AS THIS WE CAN CONQUER THE ENTIRE WORLD!!

THIS IS ALL VERY WELL - BUT HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET UP THEM BLOODY STAIRS?

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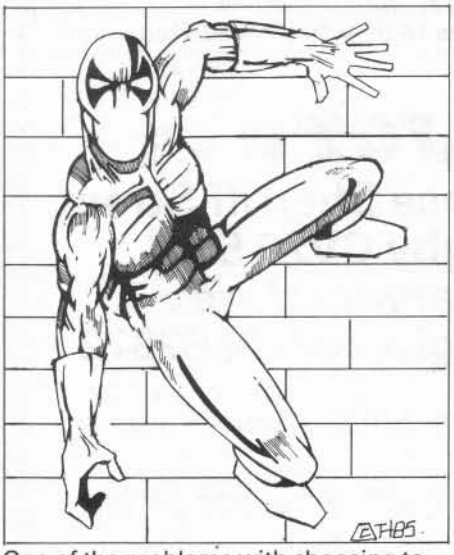
Heroes & Villains *is a bi-monthly column for Superhero RPGs, edited by Simon Burley and Peter Haines.*

# A WEB IN THE DARK

## by Simon Burley



One of the problems with choosing to give a list of superpowers from which players can choose by rolling dice or some other means, is that it is difficult to come up with an exhaustive list. Sooner or later, someone is going to want a power which is not given in the rules. It seems likely that new powers for the various Superhero game systems are going to be designed and published from time to time in much the same way that new magic items or spells are produced for FRPs. Since the publication of *Golden Heroes*, we have received letters commenting on the absence of certain powers from the Superpower Generation Table in the game. Obviously we would like to hear from as many people as possible with regard to things like this, particularly as it is in our best interests to make the game as complete as possible.

However, there was a rationale behind our choice of powers for *GH* and there are specific reasons why certain powers which some players might think essential were omitted. The most common powers from comics had the highest chance of appearing. Certain powers appeared so rarely that they were omitted. For example: only one character in comics (of which we are aware) has 'Web-shooters'. We consider them to be unique items to be possessed by one character, not by lots of characters.

Additionally, certain comicbook superpowers have a potential far beyond their use in the stories. Whilst a writer can gloss over or ignore such powers in their story, the typically inventive role-player will always seek to get the most out of his superpowers. A hero with the ability to blind an opponent will only do so rarely in the comics. In an RPG it would become a standard tactic. Thus, superpowers whose use in the game would be at variance with their use in the comics either have to be omitted or handled extremely cautiously.

This said, however, we can use the *Golden Heroes* rules to simulate all superpowers found in the comics and you can expect to see new powers appearing from time to time.

### Web-Slinging

Since there is only one character using such devices, we'll list what he can do. He uses his webs as lines to swing on, as trampolines to catch him when he falls, as parachutes, to bind people, to parry attacks, to seal doors shut and to fire as 'web-balls' to knock-out thugs etc. Now we look at the *GH* rules to decide if there are any numbers or rules which will help us rate the device. Here we find the parrying rules, the binding rules and the fact that Energy Attacks/Magic/PSI are handled in groups of 15 points per 5 frames. Thus we can give the character 15 points worth of 'Web Fluid'.

### Allocation of Cost of Abilities

**Lines**: A fairly minor use, simulating a Line Slinger which any character can have for no cost. Minimal cost, ie 1 pt per line formed.

**Parries**: In the comic, the character spins a circle of web which catches the attacks. This is an Autoparry. It seems to be very effective, so we'll say 1d6 per point of fluid used. However, the webbing is not so good against energy so we'll say that Energy does double damage to the Parry.

**Web-balls**: These are only used rarely and so can't be very effective, certainly not as good as an Energy Attack. So they should cost more, 2 pts per die damage which must be predominantly HTC. So to do 3d6 HTC (and 1d6 HTK) would cost 8 pts. Naturally, the damage must be split between the HTC and HTK like Energy Attacks but the Web-balls have no effect on damage dividers.

**Binding**: Looking at the comics we find that the web can hold most people but a certain green-skinned behemoth snaps it every time. Looking up his strength we find that he can inflict 50-60 HTK on the binding (in his passive state, of course). Thus the webs can inflict a binding of up to 60HTK. Conveniently the maximum for 10d6. If we use the Energy Attack rule of saying no more than 10 points can be used in any one shot, we find that the Web inflicts a binding damage of 1d6 per point of web fluid used.

All of the other effects listed above can be simulated by extrapolation of the above rulings during play. For example, let us suppose our web-slinger is falling from a great height and uses the webs to make a mattress to soften his fall. This will absorb 1d6 per point put into the mattress from the damage he would otherwise incur. Alternatively, he could use the web to form a parachute which will slow his fall. The SS should calculate the damage he would take if he hit the ground at his current rate of fall and state the number of dice required to negate this.

Having set the main details, all we need are the mundane ones. The attack will obviously be WC2 and take an action to use. The range should be less than an Energy Attack, approximately 10m. Obviously we could give the lines a slightly longer range, so he does not need to hit with the lines, even at extreme range of 20m.

Finally, we have a problem in that the web-fluid is not self-regenerating, unlike the comicbook energy attacks to which we have equated it. The character in the comics only rarely seems to run out. So we'll give him two web-shooters each containing 15 points of fluid, but the cartridges will take a full round each to replace. He never replaces them during battles in comics. Some players might argue that 30 points of fluid is insufficient. In comics, it takes an entire day's usage and a degree of forgetfulness to empty them. However, bear in mind that whilst a comicbook hero may forget to refill his cartridges, a role-player never does.

### Black Outs

Another power missing from the *Golden Heroes* tables is Darkness Control. This is because it is possessed by only one main character in the comics and he is rarely seen due to the anti-social and anti-comic nature of his power. If he makes it dark not only can his associates not see what's happening but neither can the reader. Black panels with speech balloons can be very boring.

In much the same way, Darkness Control can be boring in game terms. The effect of darkness is to make it harder to hit your opponent. One thing we are happy with in *GH* is the ease with which a hero can hit his opponents. Anyone who has ever experienced the frustration of trying to get their first level *D&D* fighter to hit an AC2 opponent will appreciate how important it is to be able to strike easily in an RPG. Darkness tends to make misses more common and, hence, slow the game down.

From the comics the darkness appears to be an area effect which hits everyone inside it. In *GH* a similar effect is the Windstorm in Weather Control. So at Grade 1 Darkness Field is equivalent to that; ie, it takes 1 action to create and a Frame per round thereafter to maintain. Anyone in it strikes at −2 and moves at half speed. If they move at full speed, they risk tripping over. Each time they do so, they must roll a d20 and get equal to or less than their DEX or fall over losing a Frame and spending another to get up. Higher grades of Darkness Field cannot reduce the strike chances, so at Grade 2 it will stay until dispelled without needing to be maintained.

The character's other powers can be simulated directly from ordinary *GH* superpowers. For example, he can form shapes out of darkness. We should make that equivalent to Cybernetics (hologram projector) except that the shapes formed can be any shape he desires but are always totally black. He can form black areas over a person's eyes but must roll to strike as WC2 to do so otherwise it would be too effective an attack form.

Finally, remember that if you believed what some heroes' thought bubbles said, you'd end up with impossibly powerful characters which would be nothing like the heroes really are! □

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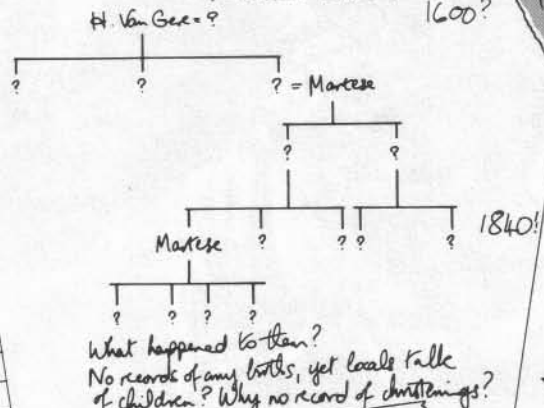
# ONCE RISEN, TWICE SHY

*Crawling Chaos is a bi-monthly column for players of* Call of Cthulhu. *This month we present a baffling collection from an investigator's notebook. Steve Williams and Barney Sloane have prepared the documents for your perusal . . .*

These cuttings provide valuable clues to the riddle of Tempest Manor, and its mysterious inhabitants. These notes are designed as background/handout information to be used in conjunction with *The Lurking Fear*, H P Lovecraft's classic tale of terror. Even if investigators are familiar with the story the clues are presented as the deceased reporter's 'case file'. Players could then have the unenviable task of picking up the pieces (literally!).

And wintry walks the Wendigo,
The farmers curse their fear,
The seasons' wheel is slowly halting,
The mound folks' time is near.
The Stormy Mountain's manor gate
Swings open to the gale
The tunnel long is slowly nearing
The light, the roots, the air

TEMPEST MANOR




What happened to them?
No records of any births, yet locals talk of children? Why no record of christenings?

**VAGRANTS ARE SAVAGED**

Near Lefferts Corner village, marshals of the White Mountain area yesterday found four bodies lying in woods around Mt Pleasant. They appeared to have been killed by a wild animal, probably a bear. A hunt was organised but the weather was typically foul, and the plan called off. The victims were all male, from a squatters camp nearby. Governor Hitchin made it clear today that it was just another reason for doing something positive about these people. He also warned that women and children were at risk. The campaign to have the gypsies

*New York Times 3rd Jan 1928*

**MAN IN SUBWAY INCIDENT**

Today, police reported the continuance of a shoot-out in the NY subway near Melvin Block. It seems that a man entered the tunnel last night, with a .45 and threatened workmen repairing the roof. One of the men, Mr Lawrence, escaped through a service hatch. He reported that the man was incoherent, and babbling a tale about killing 'all of them', and 'waiting till the lightning brought the roof down. He is clearly mad, and police are investigating the theory that he escaped from a local sanitorium.

There has long been great mystery about the hills of New England. In Lefferts Corner an old fellow told me that the Indians who lived there believed in Earth Spirits who devoured any man who did not make the correct signs upon confronting them. Furthermore the farmer implied that he, and not a few others besides, still saw these manifestations. More he would not say. The story intrigued me to such an extent that for a few days it was the object of my entire interest. Other myths turned up from similar sources, and it seems that the Heathen gods punished those who ate meat in a certain season, by changing them into goblins, and forcing them to take up a cannibalistic modus operandum. With the coming of the White Men, this myth became a source of hope for the Indians in that they now became the objects of punishment. These goblins dwelt under barrows and tumuli, and are blamed for many disappearances in the wilderness.

**ANCIENT INDIAN BURIAL CUSTOMS**

*The Season's Wheel is Slowly Halting,*
*The Mound Folk's Time is Near.* (Anon)

All across the hills of New England lie the mounds and hillock of the Indian cemeteries. Near Princetown they are found singly or in pairs, legacy of the Pawtucket tribes, while in and around the White Mountains, there are whole fields of them. Most noted are the symmetrical patterns of the Cony Mountain and Tempes Mountain Valley, though by local command none have been exhumed. In the River Indians territories near Connecticut

and sheriff J K Millwater had this to say: 'I repeat, the tall stories going round about the deaths on the slopes of the mountain are not to be believed. There are no grounds for it. You know as well as I do that these people are wanderers and vagrants. All that has happened is that they've moved their pathetic little band elsewhere; and good riddance to them. Journalists from out of town were not satisfied

William Pry
Take care of this
I'm in deep water
meet me here 3pm tomorrow

Date: 3 Dec 1927

Charge:

Report from SO Lef Cnr

27Nov, 1927, 3pm: Found 8 corpses, all Caucasian, all dismembered, all partially unclothed. Identification was impossible due to:
1) Lack of personal effects.
2) Total facial disfigurement.

All were within 30' of each other. Limbs and organs were found up to 60' away. Actual cause of death any one of up to 60 wounds. Weapons used were apparently tooth and claw. Gouges on skin and bone reminiscent of rodent mastication. Size refutes this: rodents would be 7' long. Not poss therefore to ident.
Coroner, F Jackson recommends cover-up, and covert investig.
Interesting ftnote: Gov Hitchin doesn't want investigation.
Ftnote 2: no trail leads further than 80' from the site . . .
Look up arts on gipsy out campaign.

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Address: 3273 Melvin Block,
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Yours sincerely,

P. Lucas

ssrs Lucas and Philbin)

# AMBUSH!

## Simulating Ambushes in Warhammer by D P O'Connor

*'Blasted weather!' thought Captain Tell. This was the fourth patrol he had taken out in as many days and the grey drizzle had soaked him and his men each time. He turned in his saddle and looked at the line of horsemen stretching out behind him, each one huddled into the sparse protection afforded by their capes as their mounts wearily picked a way through the quagmire of the track. A week ago an isolated homestead had been raided by a Drow war party and ever since his men had been put out on duty. 'No doubt they'll have scarpered by now,' he remarked to the corporal who had drawn level.*

*'No doubt,' mumbled the corporal in agreement.*

*Captain Tell sighed and rubbed a grimy hand over his face. 'We'll go as far as the next copse and then turn back. Tell the men.' His terse tone betrayed his weariness as he scanned the route ahead.*

*The track ran down the side of the hill into a lane between two thick hedgerows and then up to a small copse on the other side of the valley not a mile away. He reigned in his horse for a moment to allow half of his twelve troopers to pass, noting in each of them the same red-rimmed and grainy eyes.*

*He entered the lane just as the front man was reaching the far end and suddenly he felt the hairs on the nape of his neck bristle.*

*At that moment a volley of arrows whistled out of the hedgerow into the unprotected right side of his men, sending three of them tumbling to the ground immediately, and turning the lane into a screaming confusion of bucking horses and shouting men. Seconds later the hedges erupted with Drow bursting from every bush, eager to take advantage of the confusion to win an easy victory.*

*Captain Tell drew his sword and wheeled his horse in one swift movement. 'Ambush! Ambush!' he cried, hoping that his men would hear him and respond to the drills he had taught them. Two of them, he noticed, had already spurred their horses out of the trap, while another was being pulled off his horse. 'Ambush! Ambush!' he called once more, and then spurred his horse directly at the hedgerow from which the enemy had emerged. Clearing the hedge in one mighty leap he galloped on for twenty or thirty yards before looking back. 'Good,' he thought, 'at least the corporal and Yeoman Fletcher had escaped'.*

*'How many did we lose?' gasped the corporal, as they spurred their horses on at a gallop.*

*'I saw Thompson and Crabtree get out,' said Fletcher equally breathless. 'And I think I cut one of those Drow pretty bad.'*

*'I saw three go down with the first volley and another go down after. Old Toby and Willem for sure, but I couldn't see who the others were,' replied the Captain.*

*'Ought we not go back and see if the rest are all right?' asked the Yeoman.*

*'Not likely,' said Captain Tell. If they get out they know where the camp is. If not? Well that's just tough, he thought.*

The ambush is perhaps the most exciting encounter in FRP. However, for *Warhammer* players it is also the most difficult to simulate. Actually setting up an ambush on a tabletop under normal circumstances is simply a waste of time. After all, if the opposing player can see the models attempting to hide behind walls and under piles of lichen, he is hardly likely to move his forces tamely into the pit dug for them in the middle of the road. Similarly, if the models are marked on the GM's map, only to be placed when an enemy strays into the area, the opposing player will immediately smell a rat and take evasive action. In the event that the ambush is sprung successfully, then the whole affair is unrealistic (and unfair to the ambusher) because the player whose forces are ambushed are still able to function as normal (within the bounds of the psychology rules), thus negating the effect of surprise and loss of command and control. The turn sequence also works against the ambusher, the shooting phase occurs after the movement phase which means that the ambushed player is able to move his troops out of the ambush before the ambushers can get to grips. This makes a mockery of the classic ambush technique of 'one round, then in'. To actually get a satisfactory ambush a rethink of the rules is needed, and a procedure worked out.

Ambushes are best used as part of a campaign for reasons which will become apparent. Ambushes are not an end in themselves. Rather they should be used as part of a wider policy in your campaign. They may be used to blind the enemy's reconnaissance, to harass a relief column, to protect a particular feature, eg the roads leading to a treasure store, or simply to confuse the enemy as to the true whereabouts of your own forces, or to deny access. They are most effective against smaller units such as patrols and supply columns.

## AMBUSHES IN THE CAMPAIGN

The best format for a campaign is for the two opposing players and the GM to each have a map upon which to record their movements and their forces. The GM will, of course, have the dispositions of each side recorded on his map along with any encounters he has prepared. This system, in effect, means that both players are blind as to their opponent's whereabouts and must, therefore, carry out reconnaissance to ascertain the enemy's strength and disposition. This in turn leads to the necessity of small units being despatched ahead of the main army to look for the enemy. Should the opposing player wish to keep his positions secret, then he must prevent the enemy from carrying out reconnaissance of his position. The best way to do this is by ambushing the enemy's scouts.

To prepare an ambush, the ambusher (player A for convenience) must first move his force to the desired area and then notify, in secret, his intention to stage an ambush on any enemy that happen to chance that way. The GM then marks the position and strength of the ambush on his map for future reference.

## THE AMBUSH ON THE TABLETOP

When an enemy strays within range of the ambush, the action is transferred to the tabletop. However, the victim (player B) does not automatically take control of his troops, instead the GM controls them. This prevents player B getting smart and avoiding the ambush altogether or ambushing the ambushers. The GM will then move player B's forces along the course that they were heading until they enter the ambush.

At this point it is necessary to suspend the normal turn sequence. This is entirely at the option of player A; he may prefer to keep the normal sequence. He may spring his ambush at any time during his opponent's movement phase. The result of this is to cancel the rest of players B's turn, ie he has no shooting, hand-to-hand combat, reserves, magic, or rally phase. It also cancels all player B's remaining movement phase.

Player A springs his ambush by simply declaring 'Ambush'. He then begins his turn with the shooting phase, followed by movement, hand-to-hand combat, reserves, magic, and rallying phases. On player B's next turn, the sequence returns to normal.

Player A also receives two more advantages from his ambush. Firstly, he may retreat his troops a half move during the reserves phase. However, if he does take advantage of this rule, then he cannot subsequently turn his troops round on the next move. This represents the 'hit-and-run' aspect of the ambush. Secondly, on the first round of combat, player B's forces Weapon Skill is reduced to 1 to represent surprise and the time taken to draw weapons etc.

So what, then, is player B doing while his prize troops are being cut to pieces under the control of the GM? On each move, at the start preferably, player B rolls 2d6. If he scores equal to the troops' Int −1 (or less) *twice*, he may regain control of his troops. For example, the GM declares an ambush to be imminent and the troops are placed on the table. Player B then rolls 2d6 and scores 7. His troops are Elves and their Int is 9 so this roll counts as a successful roll. On the next move he rolls 12, a failure, but on the next move he rolls 5. He has now successfully rolled Int −1 twice and may regain control of his troops. This represents Captain Tell's bristling hairs – the instinct that something is going to happen. Player B may then proceed as he sees fit – either to attack the ambushers, in which case a battle takes place along normal lines, or simply withdraw.

If, however, player B does not succeed in rolling his Int (note that it is the troops' Int −1 that is rolled, not the leader's or character's) and blunders straight into the ambush then the following procedure should be followed.

1. Player A completes his turn.
2. Player B rolls his Leadership or less. If successful, he may move his troops as he wishes. If unsuccessful he must roll his troops Cool or less. If this roll is successful, then they will react according to their Drill, if unsuccessful, they will move in a manner determined by rolling 2d6 and referring to the diagram given for the Ball and Chain. This process is repeated on player B's next turn. On subsequent turns he regains control of his troops. Missile troops will fire according to Drill or not at all.

## DRILL

Most armies have set procedures to deal with situations in which there is no time to give detailed orders; the reaction to an ambush is the classic case. A drill movement should be simple enough to allow it to be carried out without thinking and should consist of two parts. Firstly, the immediate reaction, and secondly, the collective action. The first part refers to the individual's task, and the second part refers to the regrouping of the unit and the possible retaliation. However these drills are formulated, they must be submitted to the GM at the beginning of the campaign and should remain constant throughout. Drills may be changed at the GM's discretion, but I would recommend that the number of times that they are changed be limited, on the grounds that it is difficult for troops to adjust to new ways. Troops with low intelligence should never be allowed to change their drill, as they have difficulty remembering it anyway . . .

## DRILLS AND TACTICS

### The Ambush

When embarking on an ambush a player should bear two main things in mind. Firstly, he should aim to kill as many of the enemy in as short a time as possible, before making good his escape while the enemy are still in disarray. Secondly, he should take account of the possibility that he may be discovered and attacked himself.

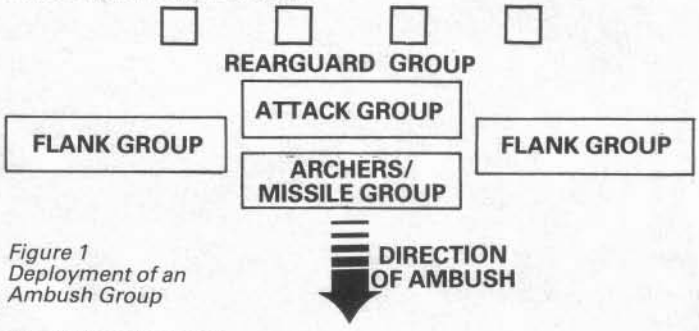



*Figure 1*
*Deployment of an Ambush Group*

### The Killing Ground

An ambush group should be split into five parts: archers, attack group, two flanking groups and a rearguard, laid out as shown in *Figure 1*.

The first part of the ambush consists of the archers firing at close range into the enemy. In the movement phase, the attack group moves through the missile group to engage in hand-to-hand combat. This requires a rather liberal interpretation of the interpenetration rule, but I feel that if skirmishers can move through a regular formation, then the reverse if also possible.

At the same time that the attack group moves in, so should the two flanking groups in order to prevent the enemy from escaping. They should not, however, attempt to encircle the

enemy, as this allows them to run away and, if higher than the melee, allows the missile group to shoot at the fleeing rabble.

The rearguard group renders two services, firstly, if they are armed with missile weapons they can pick off any enemy who decide to charge through the ambush, and secondly, they provide a first line of defence should they be attacked from the rear.

The size of force required for an ambush will vary considerably according to what is available from campaign forces, and what you expect to ambush. My favourite tactic is to use dark elves for the job, as a fairly small party can cause a lot of mayhem. I use 3-4 crossbows as the missile group, 3-4 dark elves mounted on old ones, for the attack group, and 1-2 on foot as each flank group, with a rearguard group of two crossbows.

If my ambush is discovered, depending on the size of the enemy force of course, I will retreat hastily. I only attack if I can get a three to one superiority.

If my own forces are ambushed, then there are a number of options available. Firstly, I use my most intelligent troops for reconnaissance and patrol work because they have the best chance of avoiding an ambush. If they do roll a successful Intelligence score, then I will only attack if there is the prospect of an easy victory, or if it is vital that the recce proceeds. This is because it is too easy to bleed away one's own forces in small actions to the point that it will seriously weaken the army when the main battle takes place.

The drill I use for protection is again based on dividing the force into smaller parts. *Figure 2* shows the order of march, a forward or advance guard, a centre, and a rearguard. In an ambush, the drill is aimed at removing your forces from danger as quickly as possible. There are two ways of doing this; firstly, on being ambushed, the advance guard and the centre will attempt to move straight through the flanking group that is approaching their front, whilst the rearguard follows as best it can. The advantage of this method is that one is virtually guaranteed of getting some troops out, but the disadvantage is that the rearguard is invariably mauled.

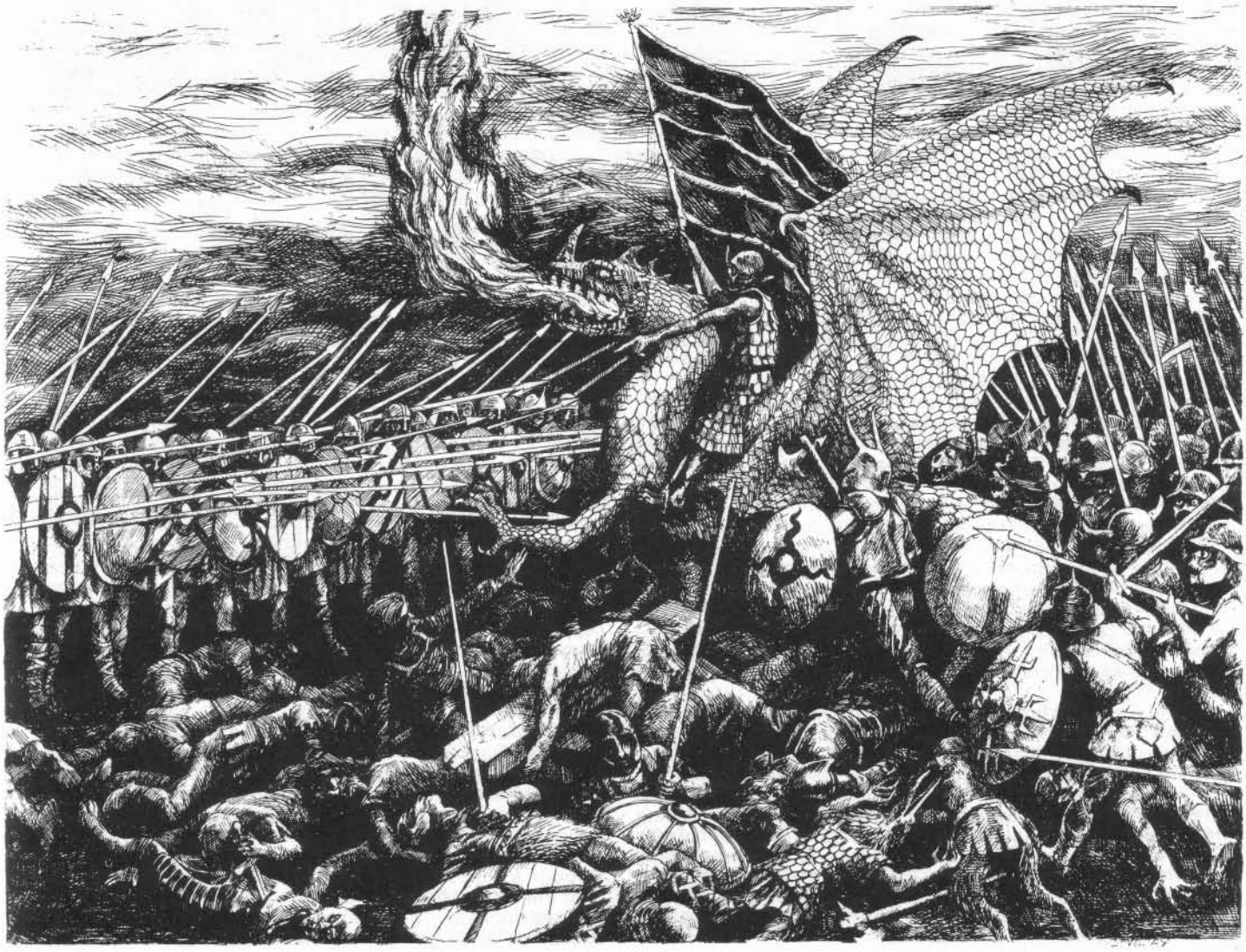
The second method consists of all three sections simply turning to face the attacker and attempting to push him back, thereby defeating the ambusher in a straight fight. This should only really be tried if the patrol is a fairly strong one.

Once this first reaction has taken place the ambushed forces should try to regroup in order to either retreat or to turn around and attack the ambushers.

*Figure 2*

The actual strength of a patrol is debatable. They should be strong enough to take on an ambush with a reasonable chance of escape, without being so large that their loss would provide a serious reduction in the army's fighting potential. I usually use a troop of some nine mounted troops with an average stature leader. Elves are the best choice of troops due to their high Intelligence, but they are also expensive to lose in terms of Points Values. Half orcs, orcs and humans are a suitable alternative. Halflings are a possibility, but their poor fighting capabilities mean that they are more likely to lose in an ambush.

Ambushes are highly entertaining small actions. They provide an ideal scenario when playing time is limited and several battles may be fought in the space of time that it takes for one large battle. These rules and hints can certainly help to make them more realistic and add a touch of spice to any campaign. □



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**MZ4** Female Adventurer

**SET 3 N.B.C. UNIT**

**MZ5** Trooper Officer w/pistol
**MZ6** Trooper firing HV/pistol
**MZ7** Trooper w/HV M/C gun
**MZ8** Trooper w/Flame thrower
**MZ9** Trooper w/Auto-rifle

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**MZ11** Cyborg
**MZ12** Punk w/axe
**MZ13** Female w/blades
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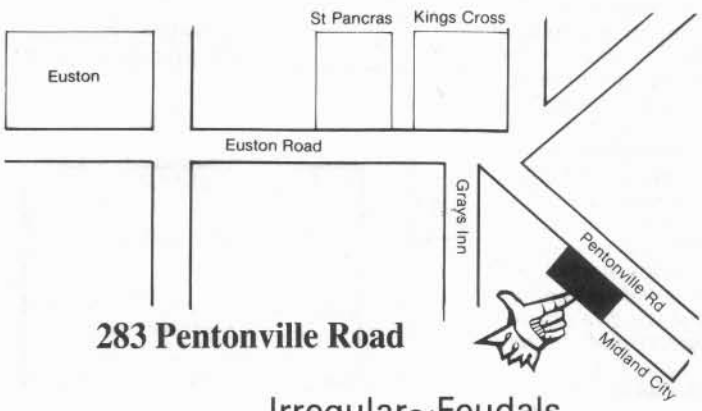


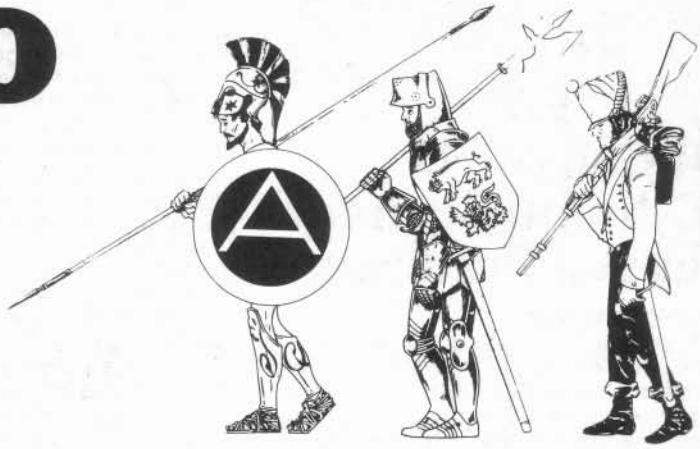

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# The Horse of the Invisible

## A Call of Cthulhu Scenario by A J Bradbury

**INTRODUCTION**

This scenario is freely adapted from William Hope Hodgson's short story of the same name. Despite the deliberately misleading initial plot the climax of the action will bring the investigators in contact with a particularly dangerous creature bent on wholesale destruction. Keepers should reserve this scenario for a time when player characters are comparatively fit and healthy.

**KEEPER'S INTRODUCTION**

The players must be encouraged to take this case – apparently a simple, if somewhat fearsome, case of haunting – on the grounds of compassion. The sanity, and just possibly the life, of a young woman (Mary Hisgins) is threatened by the manifestation of an ancient family curse – the White Horse of Shalladholm. Miss Hisgins is a most attractive young woman who has recently become engaged to Sub-lieutenant Charles Beaumont. The hauntings began almost as soon as the engagement was announced. One of the investigators will know of the case either through social connections, a childhood friendship with Miss Hisgins or, for added tension, because one of the male investigators was himself nearly engaged to Miss Hisgins at some earlier date. (In the latter case the break-up of the romance will have been by mutual agreement, allowing a continued friendship.)

**The Curse of Shalladholm**

The curse of the White Horse of Shalladholm (the ancestral home of the Hisgins family for over six centuries) dates back nearly four hundred years. The curse arose out of a romance between the son of the village blacksmith and the only daughter of Vere d'Vere Hisgoine in the 1530's. Not surprisingly, Hisgoine had no intention of seeing his daughter besmirch the family escutcheon by such a degrading liason. Instead of simply sending her off to stay with relatives in London, however, he took the law into his own hands (he was, after all, the local magistrate), went into the village and beat the young swain within an inch of his life. The young man did, in fact, survive the beating, but at the price of irreparable physical damage. Ironically the exertion triggered a heart condition the Squire had been developing for some time past. Within a month of the beating Squire Hisgoine was dead and buried.

In these circumstances the blacksmith expected that Miss Hisgoine would prove her devotion to his son by marrying him. Yet Miss Hisgoine chose, instead, to marry a distant cousin. What the enraged artisan did not know was that the dead squire had entirely squandered the family's wealth and that the marriage was one of convenience rather than love. In his anger the blacksmith, with the help of a local occultist, caught and slaughtered the late squire's favourite horse – a white stallion – swearing that, whenever a female member of the Hisgoines became engaged, the spirit of the stallion would return to destroy the match, and if possible, the girl herself.

In the first two hundred years following the raising of the curse five female members of the Hisgoine family were affected by the curse. Two committed suicide, one 'fell' from an upper window, one died of a 'broken heart' (heart failure?), and the last died one evening in the manor grounds, apparently kicked by a horse (though no horse was known to be in the area except the two docile family horses safely stabled on the far side of the house).

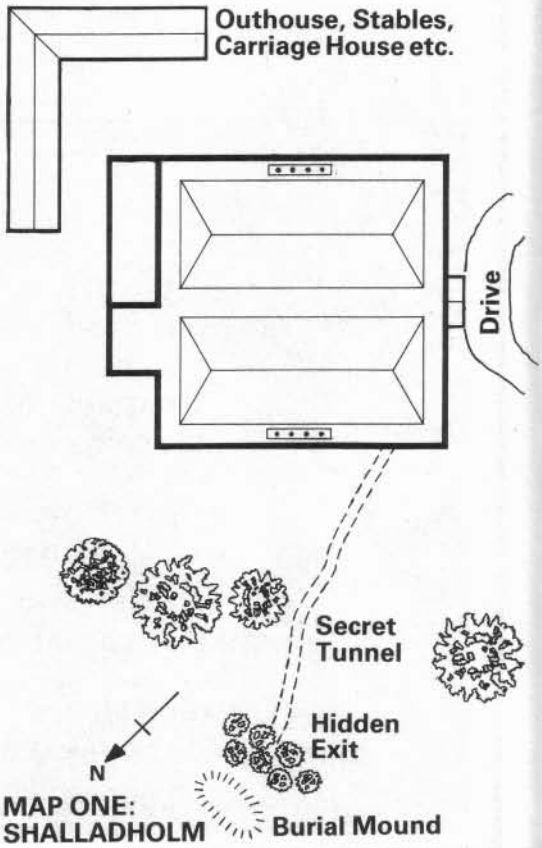
Since that time some seven generations of Hisgins (the name was Anglicised at the time of the Napoleonic Wars) have passed without a single female child surviving beyond the age o ten. Thus the curse is now regarded as a quaint myth rather than a genuine danger. The investigators will need to make a successful Library roll, with only half normal chance of success, in order to find a record of the events described above in the Hisgin's library plus three hours of research. If they don't find this record the Keeper should not give any other confirmation of the truth of the curse.

The investigator who is already acquainted with the Hisgins will naturally wish to take the case, and it is assumed that the other players will agree to accompany him/her. In this case they will all be invited to spend a long week-end as guests at Shalladholm.

Once the investigators take up residence at the manor house a series of hauntings will occur. These must be organised in the order given below, though the exact speed at which events reach their climax is very much a matter left to the Keeper's discretion. Above all the Keeper must ensure that the investigators have every possible chance to interpret the hauntings as purely man-made phenomena, or at worst as the work of a poltergeist, whilst not deliberately obscuring the occasional hints that a far more terrible evil is involved.

**INVESTIGATOR'S INTRODUCTION**

The Hisgins family – Captain Saul Hisgins (Army, retired), his wife Emily, and their daughter Mary – live at Shalladholm, the manor house of the remote village of Lower Shallad in Norfolk (Map One). The family, and servants, are all aware of a family legend that no daughter of the family may ever survive long enough to get married. No-one knows where the legend comes from or whether it has any truth to it. Indeed, since there have been no female Hisgins who survived beyond the age of seven or eight (for entirely natural reasons – poor medical facilities, genuine accidents, etc) the legend has never been put to the test for over seven generations (about 180-200 years). It might not have been mentioned now but for some strange events which have occurred over the three week period since Mary Hisgins became engaged to Charles Beaumont who has been staying with the family for some time. (The explanation for Beaumont's extended presence will depend on the period in which the game is set. He may be convalescing, from a wound or an illness




MAP ONE: SHALLADHOLM

contracted in distant parts, between postings, etc.)

As soon as the investigators arrive at Shalladholm they will be told of the three 'hauntings' which have occurred so far:

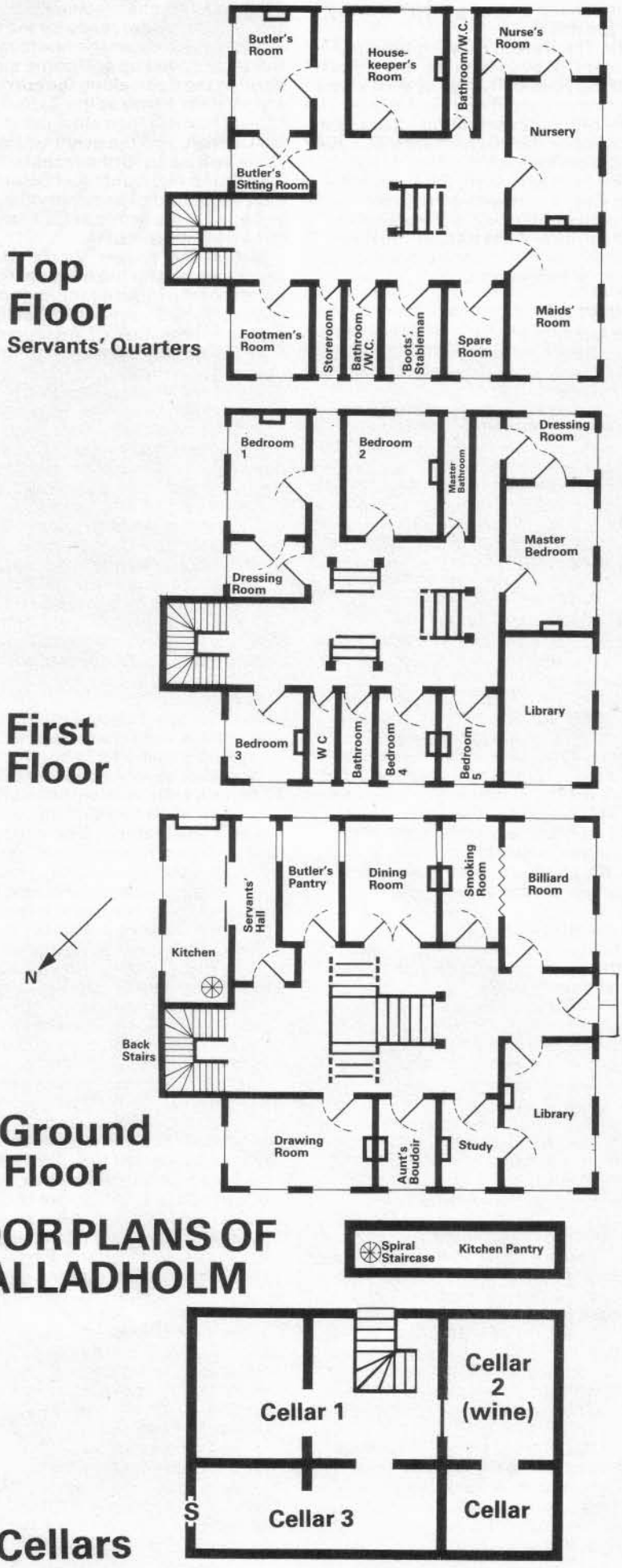
**1**. On the day of the engagement, before it had been officially announced, Mary and Beaumont were in the great corridor about dusk – before the lamps had been lighted. Without any warning they heard a grotesque sound like a horse neighing. The next moment Beaumont received a tremendous blow or kick which broke his right forearm. When servants responded to Miss Hisgins' screams, with lamps of course, they could find nothing to explain the event either in the corridor itself or anywhere else in the house.

**2**. Three days after the engagement Beaumont and Captain Hisgins were woken by the sound of terrified screams from Mary's bedroom. They both lit lamps and arrived at Mary's bedside almost simultaneously. The young woman claimed to have been woken by the sound of a horse neighing close beside her. Almost as soon as she awoke the sound stopped and there were no further phenomena. Beaumont then went and woke the butler and the three men made a thorough search of Mary's bedroom and the adjoining corridor. With no success.

Over the next couple of weeks both Beaumont and Mary, separately and together, heard the sound of hoofbeats and/or neighing on almost a daily basis – but always at a distance. The third 'threatening' event has occurred only two days before the investigators' arrival.

**3**. Again at dusk, whilst seated in a room off the main hall, both Beaumont and Mary heard the sound of hoofbeats approaching the front door. (If the period is suitable this will be the aunt's boudoir and the aunt will be chaperoning the couple.) Disregarding the notion that 'discretion is the better part of valour' Beaumont went out into the darkened hall, opened the front door and stepped outside. For a moment Beaumont felt relief as the hoofbeats had ceased and there was nothing to be seen in any direction. The next instant his apprehension was renewed and intensified as the front door crashed shut behind him and for several minutes resisted all his attempts to re-open it. And when it did open, as suddenly as it had closed, the situation got worse rather than better.

As Beaumont stepped back into the hall he naturally turned to close the front door. It was then that he heard a sound which he interpreted as that caused by his sweetheart blowing him a kiss from the far side of the hall. Turning back Beaumont began to raise his hand to return the kiss – and at the same time realised that there was, in fact, no-one in the hall but himself – at least there was no other human being present! He immediately shouted to Mary to stay where she was, no matter what might happen, and started across the hall. By the light of a torch made of a bunch of matches Beaumont crossed the tiled floor, despite hearing a second kissing sound only a few feet away. Finally, as he reached the room where Mary



waited, they both heard the sound as of a great hooved animal galloping away down the drive.

**Note**: The Keeper may legitimately encourage, or even inititate, any discussion of the possibility that at least some of the events described may have an entirely rational explanation – a draught blew the door shut, Beaumont may have been unable to open the door simply because he was turning the handle the wrong way, etc. However, neither Beaumont or Mary will accept such explanations and the Keeper must not *force* them on the investigators against their better judgement.

## THE FIRST DAY

On the assumption that the investigators will spend a reasonable part of the first day of the adventure in preparation and travel their arrival at Shalladholm should be timed for the late afternoon or early evening. What time remains to them should be taken up with meeting the family and servants, hearing the tales outlined above, dinner and, if they take the opportunity, there is sufficient time to explore the library and discover the material on the Curse of Shalladholm.

There will be no untoward events during that day or the first night.

## THE SECOND DAY

During the second day the investigators may do whatever they wish with one exception: they must not be allowed to make a thorough search of the cellars of the house. If necessary the Keeper may invent another appearance of 'the horse' (preferably well away from the house), a visit by a local police officer or any other suitable means of heading the players off as subtly as possible. Floor plans should be made available to the players as and when they move into the relevant areas. No unnatural events occur until after dinner on the second day.

### Enter the Horse

If the Keeper has been forced to introduce the horse already, as a diversion, he must ensure that the phenomenon ceases before any of the investigators have a chance to witness the alleged manifestation. Their first chance for a first-hand experience of the haunting will come at approximately 9.30-10.00pm on the second day.

At this time dinner will be over and the players will be either in the lounge (taking coffee with Mary and Mrs Hisgins), or in the billiard room (with Beaumont and Captain Hisgins). After enough time has passed for a couple of games Mary will come into the billiard room to invite anyone present to come for coffee. All will agree. (If anyone has an alternative idea the Keeper may insist that they have a duty to guard the young couple whenever they are together.)

Once everyone is clear of the billiard room (and the door is closed) the sound of hoofbeats will be heard loudly from within. All investigators present must make their SAN roll or lose 1 point of SAN. At this point Mary will flee towards the stairs where she will be protected by her father who seizes a cavalry sabre from a display in the hall. Beaumont will go to his room to fetch his gun and any investigators who possess fire-arms should be *encouraged* to fetch them.

When everyone involved is assembled in the corridor ready for the assault on the billiard room the hoofbeats will suddenly speed up and come straight *through* the door, along the corridor and up the stairs towards the Captain and Mary. They will then stop just short of the Captain, and the event will be over. There will be no further occurrences on the second night until just before dawn, then the sound of heavy hoofbeats will be heard in the grounds for between three and five minutes.

**Notes**. The 'trigger' for the charging hoofbeats will be the moment that the handle of the billiards room door is turned. If any investigator should decide to try and enter the billiards room before everyone else is ready this will still cause the hoofbeats to gallop out of the room to the stairs. Anyone standing in the corridor during the charge automatically loses 1 point of SAN.

Any investigator who initiates an overnight guard on Mary and Beaumont may be rewarded with 1 point of SAN *or* POW per person (ie one point for guarding Mary, one point for guarding Beaumont). The Keeper may suggest, through Beaumont or Hisgins, that the guards work in shifts. If any of the guards leave their posts when the hoofbeats are heard in the early morning they will see nothing but may be penalised as the Keeper sees fit.

## THE THIRD DAY

Due to the upsets of the previous night most of the main characters, especially investigators who have been on guard duty, will probably sleep late (11.00am-12.00pm). Little will happen during the afternoon, with one exception.

Any investigator(s) who engage Miss Hisgins in conversation will learn that she is expecting the arrival of her cousin, Harry Parsket, sometime during the day. Outwardly Miss Hisgins will express the utmost confidence in Parsket, but if the player(s) involved can make a successful Psychology roll they will realise that Mary has certain unconscious reservations about her cousin.

Alternatively, any investigators in the bedroom area in the early afternoon may attempt a Spot Hidden roll. If successful they will note a house maid preparing one of the empty bedrooms for occupation. If the maid is questioned she will only say that Mr Parsket, Mary's cousin, is expected to arrive before dinner. If a player can make their fast talk roll *and* offers a reasonable bribe the maid will explain that there was talk in the servants' hall of a possible romance between Mary and Harry Parsket about 18 months ago, but nothing ever came of it.

### Danger in the Park

Harry Parsket will arrive in Shalladholm not more than an hour before dinner (when members of the party are due to dress for dinner). If any investigator is close to the front hall within ten minutes of Parsket's arrival they may attempt a Spot Hidden roll and an Idea roll. If rolls are successful the player will notice that Parsket looks remarkably fresh for someone who is supposed to have travelled down from London by steam train, and it will occur to them that Parsket may actually have been in the area for at least 24 hours *before* his alleged arrival.

About ten minutes after he arrives Parsket will take his bags up to his room (he hasn't brought a valet with him) to prepare for dinner. Captain Hisgins will invite the investigators to take drinks with him before dinner. Only then will they discover that Mary and Beaumont are not present (in fact they have gone for a walk in the grounds!). Even if the investigators start after the lovers immediately, they will still be too late to prevent the events which follow.

Not less than ten minutes after Parsket's exit screams will be heard from the manor grounds. Captain Hisgins will immediately get his sabre and rush outside. The butler will, quite independently, take up a shotgun and a lamp and also run out into the park, possibly accompanied by one or two footmen (the footmen, if any, will carry clubs of some kind rather than fire-arms). The investigators may take whatever measures they choose.

Once outside the players will find that the grounds are obscured by a fairly heavy mist which reduces the effectiveness of lamps and torches as well as distorting sounds. At first the situation will be one of total confusion, then the players will hear three sounds quite nearby, firstly a bloodcurdling, gobbling neighing sound, then a shout from Harry Parsket, and then a pistol shot. The sounds will come at intervals of no more than one or two minutes each. Shortly after the shot is heard the players will find Beaumont standing over the prostrate body of Mary Hisgins. Beaumont holds a smoking pistol (obviously he fired the shot) and has a deep cut across his forehead. Miss Hisgins has fainted.

If questioned by one of the investigators Beaumont will explain that they felt a presence whilst walking in the park and began to walk briskly back to the house. After having gone only a few paces they heard what sounded like hoofbeats behind them. They began to run, but Mary tripped over a tree root – and began to scream. Beaumont turned to face the sound and saw a huge horse's head rearing up out of the mist. He only had time to loose off one shot before being struck across the forehead. He had only just regained his feet when the 'rescue party' arrived.

Any player making a Spot Hidden roll as soon as the couple are found (ie before any questions/discussions begins) will notice that Parsket seems to be sweating rather heavily, despite the chill mist.

## HARRY PARSKET

It will be clear by now that Harry Parsket, cousin and friend (but from his point of view, rejected suitor), is out to break the romance between Beaumont and Mary Hisgins by resurrecting the legend of the White Horse of Shalladholm. As time passes, however, he is moving towards the idea that it might save a lot of time and trouble if he were to simply kill Beaumont.

Parsket is, of course, quite mad, though still able to conceal this fact unless a skilled psychologist/psychiatrist makes a deliberate study of his behaviour over

several days. According to W H Hodgson, Parsket's activities merely serve to conceal the reality of The Horse. Keepers may feel, however, that Parsket has already found the Sigsand Manuscript and is using the *bind squarch* spell to control the creature. In this case Parsket's control over the squarch will become more and more erratic as his manic behaviour increases so that the climax of the case will be the same in either case. If the investigators, should by any chance, attempt to apprehend Parsket prematurely this will merely hasten his final loss of control over the squarch, which will then attack as soon as darkness falls.

**Harry Parsket**
**Age**:28.
**STR**:11; **CON**:11; **SIZ**:13; **INT**:14; **POW**:15; **DEX**:9; **APP**:12; **EDU**:13; **SAN**:0; **Hit Points**:12.
**Skills**: Debate 70%, Fast Talk 60%, Psychology 50%
**Weapons**: Apart from his attacks on Beaumont, Parsket will only become violent if cornered. In this case Parsket will use any weapon that comes to hand. Even with his bare hands, and fingernails, he will do 1d3+1d6 damage.
**Profile**: Well-educated, physically healthy although used to easy living.

**IN THE CELLARS**

Events in the cellars of Shalladholm will depend entirely on who enters them, and when. On *any* occasion there is a 20% base chance that the squarch will be loose either in the cellar or in the adjoining tunnel. Add 20% if a lone male investigator enters the third cellar (30% for a female) or 10% in the case of two or more people plus a further 20% anytime during the hours of darkness. The one exception to these figures is if Mary Hisgins enters Cellar 3, in which case the chance rises to 100%, regardless of who else is present.

Sooner or later the investigators will surely wish to search the cellars. There are, in fact, three adjoining cellars, though only the second and third have any special significance.

*Cellar 1* – is used for the storage of wine. The players may search high and low but they won't find anything here.

*Cellar 2* – is used for storing odds and ends (mainly junk) which fills most of the area except a central aisle leading through to the third cellar. Any investigator making a Spot Hidden roll will find a pile of wood in one corner including several long poles, smallish blocks, and some odds and ends of string. A successful Idea roll (if needed) will bring out the fact that a fair imitation of hoofbeats on the ground floor and part way up the stairs could be achieved by anyone hitting the cellar ceiling with wooden blocks tied to two of the poles. (Even if Parsket *is* using *bind squarch* these clues should still be available – as a red herring!)

*Cellar 3* – is the danger area, as outlined above. There is more junk scattered around this cellar, though none of it is significant. There is, however, a hidden entrance to a tunnel leading into the manor grounds. Since the squarch can pass through solid objects, and Parsket doesn't know about the tunnel, the entrance has not been opened for over a hundred years (when it was used by the eldest son when he wished to slip down to the village undetected by his somewhat puritanical parents). Normally, then, a player would need to make a Spot Hidden roll of one-fifth of their normal percentage to find the entrance.

However, if a *lone* investigator enters the cellars and encounters the squarch it will kill him/her and force the entrance open in order to drag the body through the tunnel. In this case small traces of brick dust, broken cobwebs, etc, will make the entrance clear on a straightforward Spot Hidden roll.

If Mary Hisgins enters this cellar alone (extremely unlikely!) the squarch will kill her. Otherwise it will merely make its presence known by the gobbling, neighing sound, and retreat into the tunnel. Anyone entering *Cellar 3* must make their SAN roll or lose 1 point of SAN due to the miasma of evil that pervades it. Anyone hearing the squarch whilst in here loses 1d3 points of SAN (without the option). If the party splits up whilst searching the cellars only those players in *Cellar 3* will be able to hear the squarch if it does turn up.

**Notes**: If a search of the cellars is arranged then, unless the players absolutely refuse it, the Keeper should ensure that Mary, Beaumont and Parsket are all included in the party. These three will automatically follow any investigator into the third cellar.

The hidden entrance can *only* be sealed using the Saaamaaa Ritual sign to be found in the Sigsand Manuscript, the Elder Sign is *not* sufficiently powerful to stop the squarch since it can project itself round the sign rather than having to pass through it.

### The Tunnel

The tunnel from the third cellar is a fairly stable construction, despite having been built as far back as the time of the English Civil War. The fact that its exit into the manor grounds lies close to the grave of the dead stallion is actually pure coincidence. Since it has been used quite regularly by the squarch, it too has an atmosphere of evil about it so that players entering the tunnel from either end must make their SAN rolls or lose 1d4 SAN points. If, however, an investigator has been killed and dragged into the tunnel then the body – with the head and upper torso removed by a single, huge, semi-circular bite – will be found lying a few yards in from the mound end of the tunnel. Anyone finding a body in this state loses 1d6 SAN points with no chance of making a saving roll.

Finding the outer entrance to the tunnel will demand a successful Spot Hidden roll whilst in the area of the burial mound.

## THE FOURTH DAY

Assuming that nothing has happened to precipitate events the climax of this adventure will occur around dusk on the fourth day. This means that the daylight hours of the day, during which all is quiet, will be the last opportunity for the investigators to find the special materials in the library.

As any Keepers worth their salt will have impressed on their players by now, the only time of real danger (excluding trips to the cellar) is during the hours of darkness. It is to be expected, therefore, that the players will have adopted some kind of regular protection for Miss Hisgins and Beaumont from sun-down to sun-up each night. They should also be ready to bring this case to a successful conclusion (especially if they've found the Sigsand Manuscript and studied it).

The final confrontation, as described by Hodgson, takes place at a specific location and at a specific time. In practice, however, it would be fairly difficult to stage the events exactly as Hodgson describes them so keepers may run the scene to suit themselves within the following guidelines:

**1**: The scene *must* be set after dark and will be preceded by sounds of hoofbeats in the grounds.

**2**: Parsket must be given a reasonable excuse for going off by himself shortly before the first event.

**3**: Within a few minutes of Parsket's exit the sound of neighing and hoofbeats will be heard close to the investigators and the lights will go out (except for any candles the investigators may have lit).

**4**: The sounds described above are being made by Parsket, who is now wearing a model of a horse's head and carrying a weighted pole with an iron horseshoe at the end. His insanity has now taken over and his only interest is to reach Beaumont and kill him.

**5**: The Keeper may make the ensuing battle as violent or brief as he likes, but Parsket must *not* be killed. Once he is brought under control the investigators may question him for a few moments and the Keeper should encourage them to believe that the mystery is over.

**6**: After an appropriate interval the neighing sounds and hoofbeats will be heard again somewhere within the house, and getting closer. The Keeper may encourage the idea that Parsket is managing to produce sounds somehow, though Parsket himself will be absolutely terrified as he knows that this is the real horse approaching.

**7**: What happens next will be decided by previous events (and the Keeper).

If the investigators have the Sigsand Manuscript they will be able to *bind* and then eliminate the squarch once and for all – for which they should receive an appropriate reward.

If the Sigsand Manuscript has not been found, but Miss Hisgins is adequately protected, then Parsket should be allowed to break free and place himself between the horse and Miss Hisgins. This will result in his death (from a heart attack brought on by fear), but won't solve the main problem – it will be up to the Keeper to decide whether to close the case here or give the players another chance to search the library.

If the players don't have the manuscript, and haven't taken adequate steps to protect Miss Hisgins, then the squarch will destroy her, and then anyone else still close at hand. Any players managing to survive this onslaught should be penalised for bringing their profession into disrepute!

## THE SIGSAND MANUSCRIPT

The Sigsand Manscript will be more familiar to regular Cthulhu investigators under its other title – the Sussex Manuscript. As readers will, I'm sure, be well aware, the name Sussex is actually a corruption of South Saxon, whilst Sigsand is derived from the German words Sig (or sigu) and Sand. Taken literally Sigsand means 'victory sand', but is more correctly translated as 'victory of the sand'. This rather cryptic title will not be found in any list of proper German names and is clearly an adopted name rather than a given name. The noted antiquarian Prof Wolf von Archensbak has noted that the earliest known copies of the Sigsand Manuscript can be dated to the time when Arab invaders ruled most of Southern Europe. On this basis he suggests that the author (or authors) of the manuscript had close contact with Arab mystics and that the 'sand' part of the name is a thinly-veiled reference to the true origin of much of the arcane knowledge contained within the document.

For the purposes of this investigation the mansuscript will be found to contain two spells – *bind squarch* (cost 1 POW point), and *dispel squarch* (total cost 4 POW points from one or more players). Although the contents of the Sigsand Manuscript are 'positive' – as distinct from the decidely negative or evil tone of, say, the Necronomicon – much of its subject matter is quite horrific and Keepers should apply the statistics given for the Sussex Manuscript to any player who reads this document.

### The Squarch – and Saiitii Manifestations

The 'monster' in this investigation is a member of one of the Lesser Servitor Races believed to be vaguely related to the shantaks. It is not, however, truly autonomous in the way that most creatures of the Mythos are since it can only enter our part of the time/space continuum at the express command of a human agent.

The squarch which manifests itself as the White Horse of Shalladholm is, in fact, a saiitii being summoned by the occultist during the ceremony conducted over the dead stallion and bound by him to the Manor House and its occupants. It acquired a rather tenuous physical form as a direct consequence of the blacksmith's hatred, and the fibrous substance of this form was succoured by the terror of the various girls whose deaths it caused. The subsequent dearth of female victims has drained the squarch of some of its power otherwise the *dispel squarch* spell could only be affected at greater (possibly fatal) cost to the person or persons casting the spell.

Because saiitii manifestations do not conform to any standard Cthulhoid pattern no regular statistics can be supplied for them other than those given in the body of the text.

### Signs of the Saaamaaa Ritual

The First and Eighth signs of the Saaamaaa Ritual (see below), when connected by a triple line, will effectively seal any opening in much the same way as the Elder Sign.

In the case of the squarch, this creature can render itself immune to the effects of certain sigils, runes, etc, by assuming a ring-shaped appearance so as to pass by the sign in all directions at once. It cannot pass *any* sign on one side only, nor can it divide in two, and therefore it cannot cross any opening totally bisected like the Saaamaaa symbol. □

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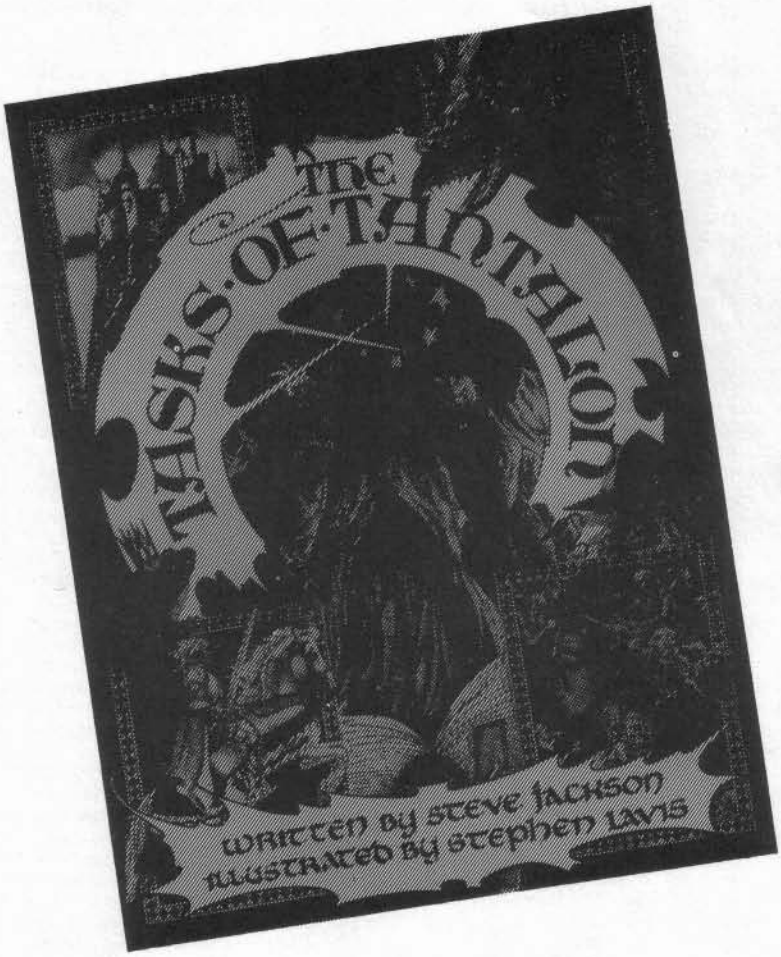


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# The Philosophers Stone

## An AD&D Scenario for a Party of 1st-2nd Level Characters, by David Whiteland

**PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION**

It is late winter, and your faces are stung by the driving wind and rain. After a long trek, you have reached Ur, a small settlement on the edge of the mountains' shadows. Without much ado, you are over the simple stone bridge across the swollen steam, and through the small wooden gate. The bedraggled gateman directs you to the Dancing Bear Inn . . . As you march toward the tavern, an old man approaches you from a nearby cottage. The rain streams down his face and long black beard. He introduces himself as Homlin the Seer.

'I need help. I have sensed ill in the mountains; something has happened to Ogrim the hermit, I feel sure. You must come at once.' Seeing that his explanation is inadequate, and noticing the more weary members of your party glancing longingly at the Dancing Bear, he adds in a coarse whisper: 'Ogrim was a recluse – a loner. I fear that his purpose, the fruit of his labours, is now left unguarded. Great evil would result if it fell into the wrong hands!'

He steps back, allowing you to continue towards the inn.

'I will meet you outside in one quarter of an hour,' he says and hastens away.

The biting rain brings you back to your senses, and soon you are enjoying the warmth and welcome shelter of The Dancing Bear.

**DM's INFORMATION**

**Ur (Map 1).** The whole settlement is surrounded by water; on the east by a stream, and by a ditch to the west. The ditch is about 5' deep and 10' wide, and fed by the stream. The earth removed during the excavation has been piled on the inside bank to form a primitive rampart. At all times the place will be guarded by a man in each watchtower, one also serving as gateman. They wear leather armour and are armed with shortbows and hunting knives.

**Cottages.** All are low single-storey buildings with thatched or turfed roofs. The windows have wooden shutters which are kept bolted at night.

**Dancing Bear Inn.** This warm and friendly inn serves the usual drinks at standard *PH* prices. There are 6 0-level locals (one with a lute) singing and laughing, with 2 womenfolk and 2 serving wenches. The barman, Troff, keeps a longsword under the counter. The inhabitants of Ur are mostly herdsmen.

If questioned about Homlin the Seer, the locals will tell (with respect) of his strange but accurate foresight; he warned the settlement of an attack from wolves two years ago. Ogrim, however, is hardly known. All the herdsmen know is that he is the dwarven hermit who comes from the mountains only for provisions.

The men will also speak of Comoran Crowfriend, the outlaw, who attacks lone herdsmen with the foul crebain – cruel and giant crows – and of the Shadow, a cunning thief who sometimes raids the settlement.

**The Farrier's.** Due to the rain, the smithy is not being worked. However, up to 4 light riding horses can be hired from here for 2gp/horse/day.

**Store.** This shop stocks no armour other than leather, and only spears, knives and shortbow arrows for weapons, at the usual *PH* price.

**PERSONALITIES**

**Homlin The Seer**; human; AC10; HTK3; LVL2; N; MU; STR:7; INT:16; WIS:16; DEX:10; CON:9; CHR:11; 2 daggers. Spells: *sleep, magic missile.*

Homlin has lived in Ur for more than 12 years. He knows Ogrim was an alchemist's apprentice and that the alchemist died many years ago. The alchemist, and now Ogrim, were searching for the Philosopher's Stone and this is why Homlin has an interest in Ogrim's affairs. He is extremely keen to possess the stone for himself, particularly because of its reputed healing properties. He will wait for the party outside the inn. He has a stout canvas-covered wagon, pulled by two horses, with 2 wolf-pelts hanging on each side to discourage hostile wolves.

He will take the party, in his wagon, 12 of the 13 miles to the hermitage. In the back there are a few blankets, a lantern, a chest (locked) containing provisions and Homlin's spell book (*read magic, sleep, magic missile, identify*) inside the wagon. He will also answer some of the party's questions; he will tell of the hermit's search for the Philosopher's Stone – but knows nothing of its transmutational properties. He will say that it can be misused in the wrong hands, but not how. He will charge the party to bring back the Philosopher's Stone, or else the secret of its manufacture, leaving no trace of either for others to find.

When the party leave the wagon, Homlin will give them a *+1 Dagger* to help them, and then return to Ur. If the party returns without the stone or its secret, he will not belive them and, with the help of 5 locals, try to overcome the players by force:

**Troff**; longsword, knife, AC7; HTK13; LVL2; Fighter.
**Rag**; club; AC8; HTK4; LVL0.
**Garbo**; (drunk); bottle (as club first round then dagger); AC10 HTK5; LVL0; falls over 1 in 8 per round.
**Olak**; hand axe, AC8; HTK3; LVL0.
**Snat**; (gateman); club, short bow; AC8; HTK3; LVL0.

**Comoran Crowfriend**; bandit; human; AC4; HTK23; LVL3; LE; Fighter; STR:16; INT:10; WIS:10; DEX:12; CON:15; CHR:12; 2 daggers, bastard sword, longbow, hand axe, chain mail and shield (with Black Crow emblem).

Comoran is a local, cunning outlaw. He knows the land well and is allied with the winter kobolds, the crebain and lesser crows. It is the crebain which have informed him of the hermit's death, and he has gathered a band of winter kobolds to loot the place, where he hopes to find the power of transmutation.

If the party is observed by any crebain or carrion crows, there is a 3 in 6 likelihood of Comoran being informed of their strength and position.

**Elsar, the 'Shadow'**; human; AC6; HTK11; LVL4; CE; Assassin; STR:12; INT:15; WIS:12; DEX:17; CON:8; CHR:15; 2 daggers, longsword, shortbow, leather armour.

Elsar is not local and is Comoran's companion. She sometimes sneaks into Ur for loot or provisions. She will accompany Comoran to the hermitage, and try to enter alone and unnoticed to get the choicest items before the winter kobolds enter. She will avoid open confrontations.

**CREATURES**

**LASHBRIAR**

| | |
|---|---|
| **No Appearing:** | 1-4 |
| **Armour Class:** | 6/9/5 |
| **Movement:** | 0" |
| **Hit Dice:** | See below |
| **Treasure:** | Victims' belongings |
| **Attack:** | 2-5 fronds for 1d3, sleep and runners (see below) |
| **Alignment:** | Neutral |
| **Intelligence:** | Non |

A lashbriar is a dangerous plant resembling a giant form of bramble. It consists of a thick AC5 stem with 2d8HP, 2-5 thorny fronds each with 1d4HP and AC6, and 2-5 runners each with 1d4HP and AC9. The lashbriar senses vibrations in the ground around it and will strike suddenly at any creature within 10'. One or two of its fronds will lash at such targets, each inflicting 1-3HP with its thorns. Any character must hit save vs poison (+2 on save) or else swoon for 1-4 rounds. If the victim falls within 10' of the stem, he will be attacked by the plant's runners. Each hit indicates that a limb (or neck) has been entangled. These tighten their grip whenever the plant sustains damage – each runner constricts for 1HP for every 2 the plant receives.

Each frond or runner fights until it reaches 0HP, but the whole plant dies if the stem is destroyed. The runners are also capable of catching passing feet with the same effect of a *trip* spell, so approaching the stem is difficult. Fire damage causes the runners to constrict at twice the usual rate – ie 1HP per HP inflicted.

*Invisibility* and *silence* do not affect the plant's attack, although *pass without trace* will. Thieves can attempt to pass the briar without causing vibrations in the ground by moving very slowly and making their Move Silently roll.

In combat, the victim is treated as being prone and partially bound, and himself attacks at −2. There are two ways to break free from a runner: reducing its hitpoints to below 1, or pulling away by sheer strength. The chance of the latter is 1 in 6, adjusted by damage bonus.

**RANDOM ENCOUNTERS**

In the wilderness there is a 1 in 12 chance of an encounter. If the party is carrying light sources of any description and being relatively stealthy, checks should be made once every 6 turns on *Table 1.*

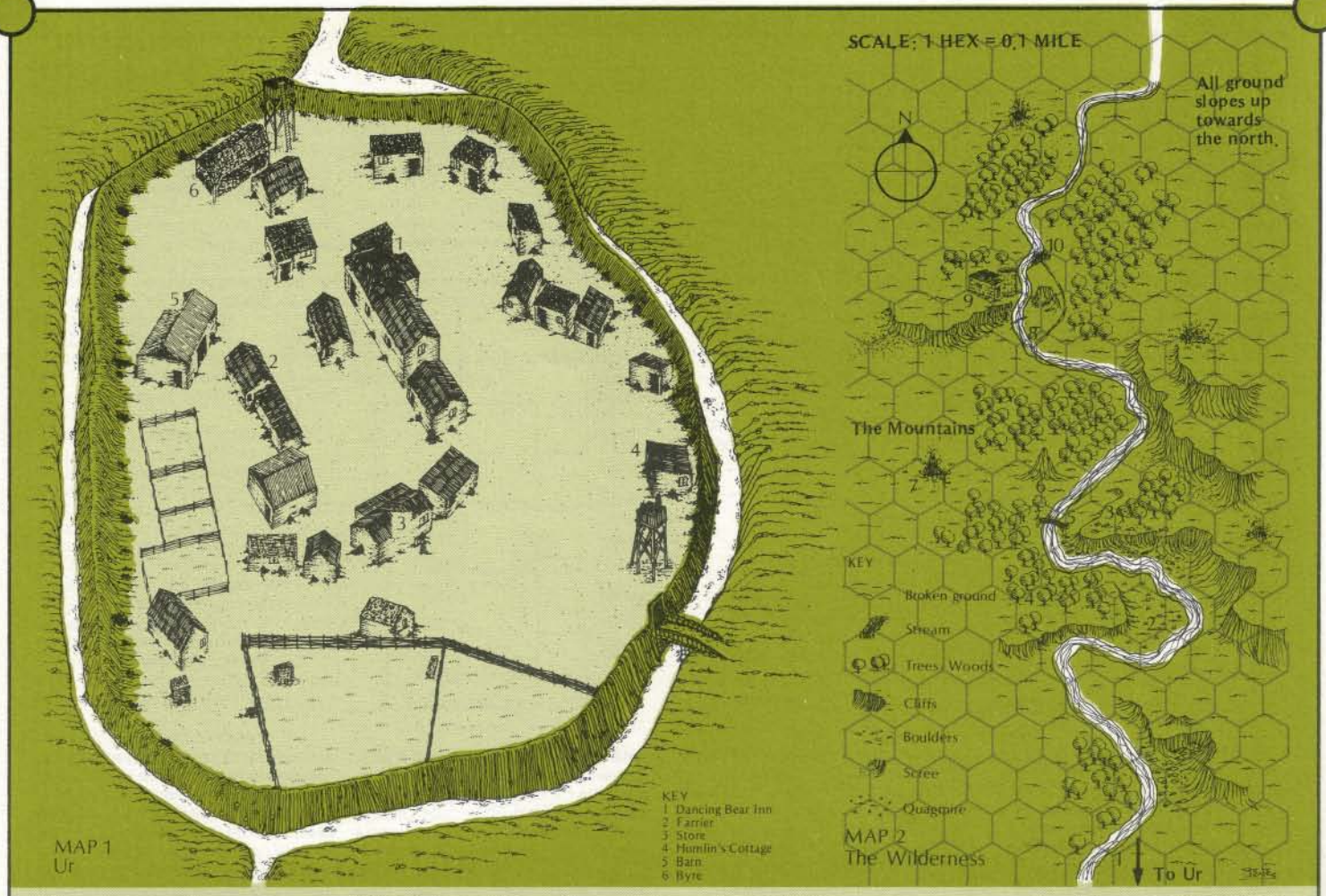
**WEATHER AND FATIGUE**

The hard rain and strong winds, as well as the bitter cold, will not subside during the adventure. Exposed torches have a 60% chance of being extinguished per round, and all but the most alert creatures will be easier to surprise – increase chance by 1 in 6. Exposed flesh will become numb; under such conditions any 'to hit' score of 1 indicates a fumble and the weapon is dropped. Any spells cast by affected creatures will fail 10% of the time. Thief-like skills are performed at −10%. Winter kobolds, bears and wolves are not affected. All movement and ranges should be considered the same as underground. Mapping and scroll use, etc, is impossible. There is a 2% chance per hour outside of catching a cold, adjusted by CON hit point adjustment – treating + as − and vice versa. Roll the dice at the end of the day. The majority of NPCs will take shelter as frequently as pos-

**TABLE 1: ENCOUNTERS**

| D100 | Number | Encounter |
|---|---|---|
| 01-05 | 1-4 | Ant, giant; AC3; HD2 [*MM*] |
| 06-10 | 1 | Bear, black; AC6; HD5+5 [*MM*] |
| 11-25 | 1-4 | Boar, wild; AC7; HD3+3 [*MM*] |
| 26-32 | 1-3 | Crebain; AC8; HD1+1; As giant crow [*MMII*] |
| 33-42 | 1-6 | Crow, carrion; AC8; HD1+1; As huge crow [*MMII*] |
| 43-50 | 5-12 | Herd animal (sheep, goats or swine: 75% chance of men) |
| 51-60 | 1-2 | Men (mostly 0-level herdsmen) |
| 61-70 | 1-3 | Spider, large; AC8; HD1+1; [*MM*] |
| 71-75 | 1-2 | Will-o-wisp (small); AC7; HD3; [*MM*] |
| 76-95 | 1-8 | Wolf; AC7; HD2+2; [*MM*] |
| 96-00 | 1 | Wolf, dire; AC6; HD3+3; [*MM*] |

Wolves which choose to howl when encountered cause an additional check once every 5 rounds, ignoring any results under 76, until the howling subsides.




sible whenever practical. The weather also affects visibility considerably. On the wilderness map, sightings are only possible if the observed is in the same hex as the observer. Undetailed sightings are possible into all adjacent hexes.

**TIMELINE**

The party arrive in Ur at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The first 12 miles of their journey, in Homlin's wagon, take roughly 3 hours. Sunset is at 7 o'clock. The winter kobolds begin their raid on the hermitage 1d6 turns after half-past seven that night.

Ogrim was killed by the quasit at midnight (the previous evening) and Homlin was woken by a particularly vivid vision in his dreams at 4 o'clock in the morning.

**THE WILDERNESS (MAP 2)**

The terrain is rocky and treacherous. The woods are mostly coniferous and have rough, scrub-like undergrowth. The stream is swollen due to the heavy rain and is very fast-flowing. Except where indicated, it is between 3' and 6' deep (1d4+2) centrally and between 6' and 15' wide (1d10+5). Crossing any stream will be dangerous and a character wading through must check for mishaps:

(1) Save vs STR. Any score less than or equal to the character's STR indicates a successful crossing – although peripheral equipment may still have been soaked or swept away. Otherwise the character has been caught by the current and must take check (2).

(2) Save vs DEX. A score greater than the character's DEX indicates a loss of footing and a stumble, falling into the water and taking 1-3HP damage on the rocky stream bed – followed by check (3). Otherwise the character manages to struggle ashore very wet but otherwise safe, but the probability of catching a cold is doubled.

(3) Save vs CON. The character struggles to get ashore and must score equal to or less than his/her CON to do so. If the saving throw is failed, the character is swept downstream 0.1 mile per round, taking 1HP damage each round. Each round the character can attempt to save vs DEX but each round in the water gives a cumulative +2 penalty. Metal armour and/or heavy equipment will lessen the character's chance of survival as the DM sees fit. A successful save shows that a rock or overhanging branch has been grabbed, and the character can try to get ashore starting from (1) again. A 'natural' 1 on the dice indicates the character has been caught and held underwater, taking 3d4HP per round until death or rescue.

There is a 10% chance of a small cave being found in any 'broken ground' hex searched by the party.

Climbing rock faces is extremely dangerous and there is *always* a minimum 25% chance of a fall.

**Features**

**1**. After 12 miles in the wagon Homlin stops and tells the party to disembark and that they will find the hermitage by following the stream.

**2**. This area is a treacherous rocky quagmire; among the small pools are patches of sucking mud, and many of the rocks will shift if any weight is put on them. There will be 1-4 will-o-wisps in the area which will attack when the party gets into difficulty.

**3**. At the top of this cliff (35'-40' high) is a mountain ogre (as normal ogre except AC8, attacks with fist(s) for 1-8, throws stones) who will hurl rocks at anyone passing below. The rocks inflict 2-8HP damage; the ogre can throw 1 rock per round. The boulders beneath the cliff provide suitable cover for anyone crouching behind them. The mountain ogre will continue to cast rocks at the characters until they move out of range. He can throw the rocks, roughly 2' across, up to 20".

**4**. The trees conceal 1d4+5 large spiders [*MM*]. They will usually be sheltering in the boles of trees and are only 20% likely to notice an intrusion, unless their webs are disturbed or fire is lit in the area. The chance of a web being disturbed is 1 in 6 for each member of the party.

**5**. A dead tree has fallen across the stream; it is about 4' wide but rotten. Each character that crosses it will succeed unless the tree breaks and collapses into the water 5' below. The % chance of the tree breaking is the total gp weight on it divided by 50.

**6**. Beneath the stone cairn lies the old alchemist, laid to rest by Ogrim. There is no inscription or plaque.

**7**. There are 1-3 lashbriars (qv) in the hex. These will be amongst normal briar patches, so will surprise 4 times in 6; Druids and Rangers might notice that these plants are unusual before coming within their lashing range.

**8**. The stream is joined by another brook, now 'dry' apart from the 6 inches of rainwater flowing over its rocky bed. This was the old course of the stream before Ogrim rechannelled it.

**9**. This hex contains the hermitage. The stream can be crossed by the stepping stones as shown on the map. Treat as a normal stream crossing, but take test (2) at −5 before test (1).

The hermitage appears to be an old stone building with a 25' high rickety tower, perched at the top of a 55' high cliff face. The pool at the foot of the cliff is about 4' deep centrally and is fed by a waterfall spilling down from the cliff top. On closer inspection small windows and a door can be seen cut into the rock face.

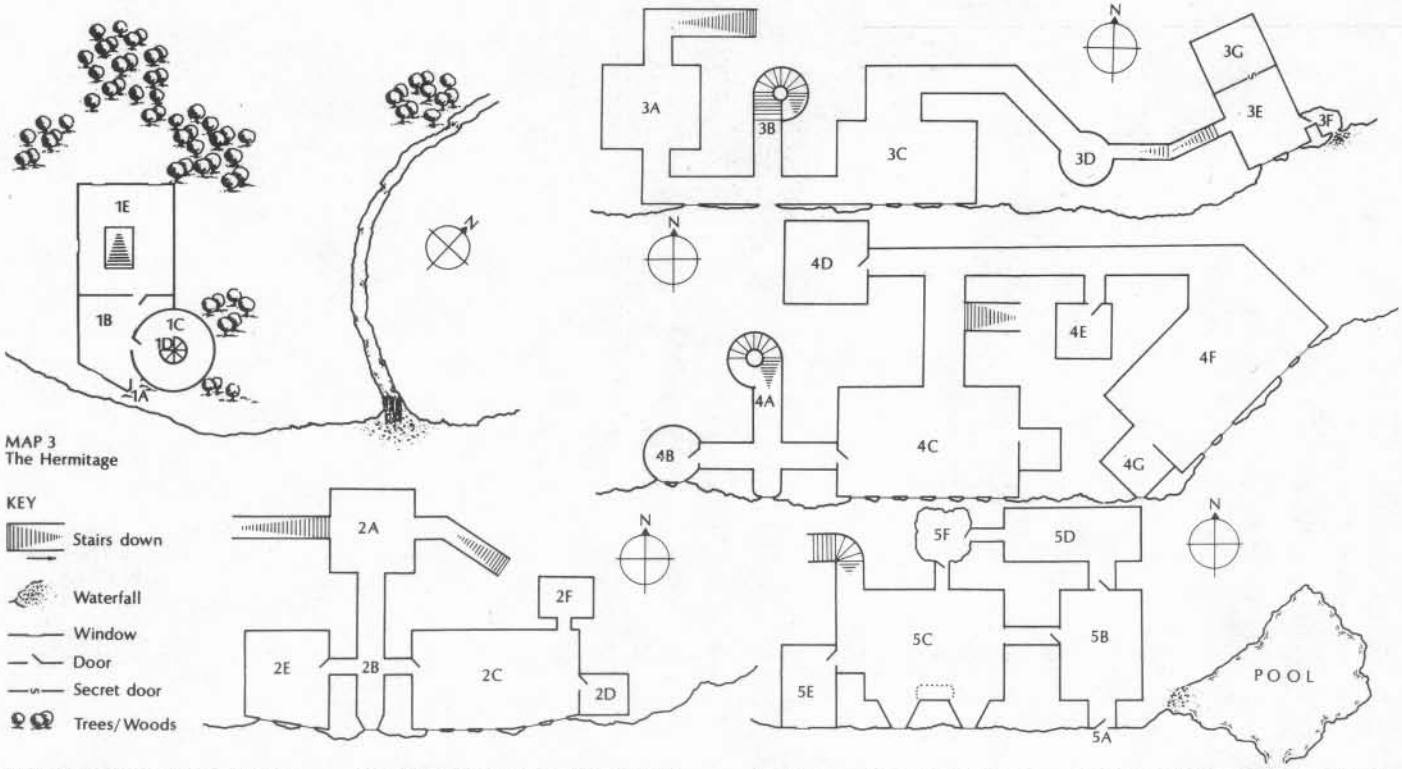
**10**. Ogrim altered the old water course by constructing an earth-packed stone dam across the original stream and directing the water towards the hermitage and over the cliff.

**THE HERMITAGE**

The hermitage is built from cut stone blocks, and has a turfed roof supported by wooden beams and a round 25' tower. The hermitage has 5 storeys, 4 storeys tunnelled out of the rock beneath. The lowest storey is level with the ground at the foot of the cliff.

The windows in the rock-face are about 2½' high and 1' wide, have no glass, and can be sealed using the interior wooden shutter. All the shutters will be latched shut unless stated otherwise. The two outside doors can be forced; the fourth successful Open Doors roll will make them crash open.

There are five laboratories in the hermitage, the less unique contents of which are shown in *Table 2*. The number shown is the number of such pieces present.▷




MAP 3
The Hermitage

◁**1A**. The top door is made of stout oak and is locked. The key is hanging on the back (inside) of the door. There is also a wooden beam which may be dropped across the door from inside. Outside, in the corner against the tower, is a lashbriar: stem 14HP, 4 fronds with 3, 4, 3 and 2HP respectively, and 5 runners with 4, 4, 3, 4 and 1HP each. Ogrim was able to pass it because of his *Boots of Elvenkind*.

**1B**. This 'lumber room' is very untidy. There are large piles of broken glass and earthenware here and there and are also old rags, 60' of rope, 3 large sacks, an old mining pick and other useless rubbish. The window shutters are double-bolted.

**1C**. In the centre of the tower's interior are steep, spiralling stone stairs leading to an iron-bound trapdoor (with 3 heavy but rusty bolts firmly shut) which opens onto the tower's flat roof, **1D**. There are three wooden cages in here containing a badger [*MM*], a wolf cub (AC10, HTK2, bite 1-2HP), and two small black squirrels. The animals were tended by Ogrim who intended to test the Stone's effect on them.

**1D**. The alchemist used to watch the stars from the tower roof, although Ogrim rarely did so. The roof is mostly covered in a layer of dead leaves and twigs, and conceals 4 large spiders [*MM*] AC8; HTK2,6,7,8. They surprise 4 in 6. The roof is surrounded by a 2' parapet, and has astronomical signs engraved on it.

**1E**. This is a laboratory. In the southern corner there is a stone missing in the wall, under the roof eaves. This allows Ogrim's 'familiar', a jackdaw, AC6; HTK5, to come and go as desired. The jackdaw has high animal intelligence and can mimic three understandable phrases. Whenever he thinks he is being spoken to, he will respond according to the score of 1d6: *1,2*: silence or incomprehensible croak; *3, 4*: 'Clever Jack'; *5*: 'Bring Gold'; *6*: 'Lead to Gold'.

The jackdaw's nest is amongst the roof rafters and contains 1 gem (10gp), a silver pin (2gp), a shiny *Bauble of Curing* (treat as a *Bead of Curing* from a *Necklace of Prayer Beads* [*DMG*]), a fragment of a mirror, 1 shiny pebble, and a small shard of tin. He will attack anyone who tries to steal from him, but will otherwise observe intruders with curiosity. Ogrim used him to collect gold and silver for his experiments.

The laboratory also contains 6 containers (qv), 1-6. In the centre of the room is the downward flight of stone stairs.

**2A**. This chamber has a low vaulted roof; nothing else of interest.

**2B**. The corridors and passages are smooth stone and have a 6' high curved ceiling. Hanging on the east wall near the window is a short hunting bow, and opposite it is a quiver containing 18 arrows.

**2C**. Another laboratory, fairly untidy and cluttered with equipment. The embers in the furnace are still slightly warm, a vessel of Hermes was being heated when Ogrim was killed. Inside is a red solid, type S. There are two containers on the bench (7 and 8).

**2D**. This small storeroom has one wooden shelf on which are 7 containers (9-15). Each of these is a dye; if consumed, the imbiber's mouth will be stained the appropriate colour for 1-4 hours (CHR down 2 points) in addition to any other properties.

**2E**. This is a spare room, containing a low berth with wolf-pelt covers, a stool and mirror. Hanging above the bed is a fragrant bundle of herbs and spices.

**2F**. Another small storeroom. As well as some useless rubbish, there are 10 containers (16-26) on the shelves.

**3A**. Apart from the rug on the floor, this chamber is plain and empty. The rug is grey and has a woven image of a serpent with a tail in its mouth. If the rug is pulled aside, and the dust beneath swept away, a faintly drawn magic circle can be seen. It was drawn by the alchemist many years ago, but its power still lingers; the quasit (see **4C**) will take 2HP damage if he tries to enter it, and must save vs magic to succeed.

**3B**. The stairs spiral steeply downwards.

**3C**. A specialised laboratory – this is in fact a distillery producing aqua vitae (almost neat alcohol!). The bench is laden with glassware, and there are two earthenware demi-johns containing aqua vitae (each demi-john contains 7 'doses'; aqua vitae: type I).

**3D**. Empty domed chamber, ceiling 15' high centrally.

**3E**. In the centre of this room is a round wooden table with an oil reading lamp in its centre, and a low stool. On each of the four walls hangs a picture.

The first shows an egg being smitten by a sword, the second a

**TABLE 2: LABORATORY EQUIPMENT**

| Apparatus | Laboratory 1E | 2C | 3C | 4C | 4F | Is It a 'Sealed Container'?** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alembic, glass | – | 2 | 4 | 2 | – | Yes |
| Balance and weights, or scales | – | 1 | – | 1 | – | |
| Bellows, hand, leather | 1 | – | – | – | 1 | |
| Bellows, foot, leather | – | – | 1 | 1 | – | |
| Book, empty | 1 | 1 | – | 2 | – | |
| Cauldron, iron | 1 | – | – | 1 | – | No |
| Candle | 2 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 2 | |
| Decanter | – | 2 | 5 | 3 | 2 | Yes |
| Furnace, large, stone | 1 | – | – | 1 | 1 | |
| Furnace, small, brick | – | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | |
| Hourglass | – | 1 | – | 1 | – | |
| Oil burner, ceramic | – | 1 | – | 1 | 1 | |
| Parchment, blank, sheet* | – | 4 | – | 3 | – | |
| Quill and ink | – | 1 | – | 2 | – | |
| Retort, clay or glass | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | Yes |
| Rod, stirring, glass | – | 5 | 1 | 3 | 3 | |
| Rod, stirring, iron, long | 1 | – | – | 1 | – | |
| Spatula or small spoon | 1 | 4 | – | 5 | 3 | |
| Spoon, measuring | – | 2 | 1 | 1 | – | |
| Tongs, iron | 1 | 1 | – | – | – | |
| Tube, glass (piping), total length: | 5' | 8' | 10' | 12' | 3' | |
| Vessel of Hermes | 1 | 2 | – | 3 | 1 | Always |
| Workbench | – | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | |
| **Containers** | | | | | | |
| Beakers, jars, jugs, pots | | | | | | No |
| Bottles, flagons, flasks, vials | | | | | | Yes |

*1 in 6 are Fael Runes (see *Table 6*, item 8) depicting an old man (the alchemist) smiling, waving, etc. The image is very hazy; these are the alchemist's prototypes.

**'Yes' indicates that the container is *typically* sealed, but as this is due to a lid of some description it may be possible to treat it as 'No' if the lid is not used (this is only true if the opening of the container is not very small). The vessel of Hermes is totally sealed in normal use. For more information see *Reactions*.

circular tail-eating serpent, the third two knights fighting, with their swords crossing in front of the sun, and the fourth shows an old serious-looking man; unlike the others this is an ancestor of the alchemist and not alchemical symbolism.

The picture on the NW conceals a large keyhole cut into the stone. If it is unlocked, the wall between **3E** and **3G** can be pushed, with some difficulty, up to 10' NE revealing the library beyond.

**3F. Washroom.** The window in this room opens directly behind the waterfall. There are a few wooden jugs and bowls, etc. The shutter is open.

**3G. The Library.** Three-tiered shelving is on the NW and NE walls, loaded with many different kinds of books. Most of them are dusty, heavy and leather-bound. There is also a tall stack of loose parchment in one corner.

There is much information to be gleaned from the library; the majority of the writings are scribed in strange symbols and marks. The amount of worthwhile information discovered is determined according to the number of turns spent poring over the tomes or notes.

*Table 3* is used to determine whether any information is found, and *Tables 4, 5* and *6* show what that information is; this may be the meaning of a symbol, or formulae or similar. The loose parchment is in fact notes taken by Ogrim, and are mostly written in his upright, rune-like hand, whereas the books tend to be written in a variety of styles.

**4A** After two full revolutions, the spiral stairs straighten out. See **3B**.

**4B** Fuel store. In here are 4 kegs of oil, chopped and stacked firewood, and two sacks of charcoal and coal.▷

**TABLE 3**

| | |
|---|---|
| Base chance of finding relevant information, per turn: | 6% |
| Reader's class: | |
| Magic User or Illusionist | +2% |
| Cleric or Thief | +1% |
| Other (including Druid or Assassin) | 0 |
| Reader's Wisdom: | |
| Each point above 15 | +1% |
| Each point below 10 | −1% |
| Reader's Intelligence: | |
| Each point above 15 | +2% |
| Each point below 10 | −2% |
| Reader in discomfort (eg got a cold, wounded badly) | −4% |
| Each symbol currently known (Never more than +3%) | +½% |

Roll D100 for each reader who has spent the turn in undisturbed research.

**TABLE 4**
(Type of information learnt)

| | Loose | |
|---|---|---|
| **D100** | **Parchment** | **Book** |
| 01-70 | Symbol (5) | General (6) |
| 71-00 | General (6) | Symbol (5) |

The players will discover the information it the order it appears in the tables, so no more dice need be rolled. Once all the symbols have been learnt, any more discovered will be obscure.

**TABLE 5**
**Symbols and their meanings**

| Symbol | Meaning | Special Case % |
|---|---|---|
| ☉ | Gold | 25% |
| △ | Fire | 24% |
| ☾ | Herbal | 22% |
| ▽ | Earth | 21% |
| ▽ | Water | 20% |
| ☾ | Silver | 19% |
| ⧖ | The Philosopher's Stone | 18% |
| | Gum | 16% |
| ♂ | Steel; iron | 15% |
| | Philosopher's/ sophic sulphur; brimstone | 14% |
| ♄ | Lead | 13% |
| ☿ | Philosopher's/ sophic mercury; quicksilver | 12% |
| | Poison, poisonous | 11% |
| | Aqua fortis | 10% |
| | Aqua vitae | 9% |
| | To purify | 8% |
| | Oil | 7% |
| | Air | 7% |
| | Spirit of wine or vinegar | 6% |
| | Aqua regia | 5% |
| E | Ashes | 4% |
| ◇ | Soap | 3% |

**Special Case**: The players may choose to search for the meaning of one particular symbol. The % chance of finding the meaning of the symbol required is shown alongside in *Table 5*. If the score is equal to or less than this value, the meaning has been learnt. If it is within 50 of the required score the next (sequential) symbol will be understood instead, otherwise nothing of interest is found.

Likewise, the players may choose not to waste time on a symbol that they believe they already know. If the tables indicate that the players discover the meaning of such a symbol, simply pass onto the next one instead.

**TABLE 6**
(General Information; bracketted information is for DM only)

1. (Two equations which occur frequently)
   ♄⧖☉ ('Lead is projected into Gold under The Stone')
   ♄⧖☾ ('Lead is projected into Silver under Lesser Stone')
2. All things are of the One Matter; even earth, fire, men and souls. (With an illustration of the tail-eating serpent – symbol of Unity)
3. (Another notable exception)
   △♂△–⧖ ('Sulphur + Mercury, with heat, produce The Stone')
4. (A narrative extracted from historical writings describing an alchemist who became rich by 'projecting Lead into Gold with the Philosopher's Stone')
5. Sophic sulphur and sophic mercury in the Life Menstruum, in the Philosopher's Egg, forms the basis of The Great Work.
6. The Egg is the vessel of Hermes.
7. (Aqua vitae was believed to be notable because of its combined properties of Water and Fire)
8. 'How to Make Fael Runes' (Fael Runes are special sigil which, when inscribed upon pure parchment, store an image which will only be released when the parchment is burnt. The book is too large and complicated to be used during the adventure, but the nature of Fael Runes can quickly be learnt. The manufacture of Fael Runes requires magic, but the image is stored chemically so the resultant (blank parchment) will not radiate magic. The image will continue to be visible for as long as as the parchment takes to burn completely, and is described by the shape of the invisible Fael Runes written upon it. Of course, the chemical and magical components required are expensive.)
9. The Philosopher's Stone is the Elixir of Life. It will purify the One Matter; base metal or man.
10. The Philosopher's Stone in its greatest form – a reddish powder – can project lead into gold. (The Stone being a red powder is, of course, just the alchemist's guess.)

**TABLE 7: CONTAINERS**

| Number | Container | Substance | Type | Label |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Jar | Wood chippings | S | – |
| 2 | Jar | Greenish acid | A | – |
| 3 | Jar | Crushed roots in vinegar | O | |
| 4 | Jar | Vinegar | I | |
| 5 | Jar | Brown liquid | T | – |
| 6 | Jar | Dark blue indicator solution | T | – |
| 7 | Beaker | Aqua fortis | F | |
| 8 | Flask | Aqua vitae | I | |
| 9 | Pot | Red dye | L | – |
| 10 | Jar | Orange dye | T | – |
| 11 | Flask | Yellow dye | P | – |
| 12 | Pot | Green dye | O | – |
| 13 | Pot | Blue dye | L | – |
| 14 | Pot | Violet dye | I | – |
| 15 | Pot | Black dye | T | – |
| 16 | Wine Flagon | Aqua regia | F | |
| 17 | Bottle | *Healing Potion [DMG]* | Z | |
| 18 | Beaker | Brimstone (lumps) | S | |
| 19 | Beaker | Lead pieces | M | ♄ |
| 20 | Beaker | Common salt | C | – |
| 21 | Bottle | Clear acid | A | – |
| 22 | Small pot | Red powder and ashes (mixture) | D | E |
| 23 | Jar | Grey solid lumps | V | – |
| 24 | Beaker | Coal, crushed | S | E |
| 25 | Pot | Oil | I | |
| 26 | Flask | Clear acid | A | – |
| 27 | Beaker | Purple powder | D | – |
| 28 | Flask | Greasy gel | V | – |
| 29 | Small pot | Brimstone (powder) | D | |
| 30 | Jar | White crystals | C | – |
| 31 | Jar | Silver (filings) | M | ☾ |
| 32 | Flask | Quicksilver | M | ☿ |
| 33 | Bottle | Black viscous liquid | P | |
| 34 | Beaker | Brimstone (lumps) | S | – |
| 35 | Jar | White chunks | V | – |
| 36 | Bottle | Infusion of bat | O | |
| 37 | Plate (pewter) | Pale blue crystals | C | – |
| 38 | Jug | Clear acid | A | MILK |
| 39 | Flask | Clear mobile liquid | P | – |
| 40 | Bottle | Pale brown acid | A | – |
| 41 | Iron box | Lead | M | ♄ |
| 42 | Wine flagon | Clear liquid | T | |
| 43 | Jar | Glue - yellowish | G | |
| 44 | Bottle | Glue - clear | G | |
| 45 | Jar | Glue - dark brown | G | |
| 46 | Old copper chalice | Grey lumps | S | – |
| 47 | Flask | Fuming cloudy liquid | P | |
| 48 | Vial | Assorted berry juices (red) | O | – |
| 49 | Flask | Greasy gel | V | – |
| 50 | Beaker | Quicksilver | M | ☿ |

◁**4C** Of all the laboratories, this one is the best equipped. On the furnace is a vessel of Hermes into which Ogrim was about to put a powdered ruby when he was slain. 1 of the 6 candles is still alight, the others have burnt themselves out.

Ogrim the hermit's body lies sprawled in front of the furnace. There is a claw scratch on the side of his head, and his throat has been cruelly bitten; there is a pool of dried blood on the floor beneath him. If the body is searched, the following will be found: tunic, belt, large belt pouch, low soft boots (*Boots of Elvenkind*). The pouch contains a large key (for the library **3G**), a comb, pieces of string and a flint and steel tinderbox. Nearby lies a spatula and a scattering of the ruby powder.

The vessel of Hermes contains a poisonous gas which will spread as usual if the vessel is opened.

In the laboratory are 6 containers (27-32).

The storeroom to the east of the laboratory is wrecked; the two shelves have fallen and the containers have been smashed. There are the remnants of their chemical contents amongst the mess. Careful examination will show that some of the liquids on the floor have been splashed by feet (smaller than human-sized). In fact, Ogrim's killer is responsible for this, and can be found, initially, in the laboratory. The quasit; AC2; HTK12; 100gp gem [*MM*], was sent by a demon lord to discover the Philosopher's Stone. However, it has been baffled by the sheer numbers of containers that could be hiding the stone – and succeeded in bringing down two shelf-fulls on top of itself. Since then it has been waiting for some sign from its demon lord that it may return to the Abyss. When the party arrive, it will wait for an opportunity to kill any lawful evil human and take his/her soul. Note that if no member of the party is a suitable lawful evil, the quasit will attempt to kill Comoran Crowfriend when he enters. In the meantime, the quasit will try to observe the party's actions without getting into a fight – he will spend most of his time *invisible*.

**4D. Storeroom.** Contents: 10 torches, 17 beeswax candles, 10 containers (33-42)

**4E.** Ogrim's favourite room: his ale cellar. There are five large tapped butts. Two are empty, the other three contain ale from Ur.

**4F.** The largest of the laboratories. It has recently been tidied, and there are no containers. There is, however, a rack of 10 fine crystal-glass spherical flasks (empty). They are intended for observing gas-producing reactions.

**4G.** Store, with containers (43-50) amongst other worthless items.

**5A.** The lower door. The outside of this door is covered with 4" long bronze spikes which will inflict 1-4HP damage on anyone trying to bodily force the door. The door is locked – the key is in the lock – but there is a stout wooden bar which can be dropped into place on the inside.

**5B.** A small hall. On the longest wall are two crossed axes, one a normal battleaxe, the other a *+1 Battleaxe* with dwarfen runes on the left. In the SW corner is a stand for walking sticks; there are four (all wooden), one of which has a 20gp obsidian set in its pommel.

**5C.** There is a long table with a low bench alongside in the centre of this room. The hearth is for a wood fire; the chimney is a 1' diameter round hole leading to the outside (at 45°).

**5D.** This is the scullery and contains a workbench, a full water-butt and basic culinary equipment – including an iron pot which hangs over the hearth in **5C**.

**5E.** Ogrim's own room has his small, low bed with its bearskin cover. There is a large trunk containing the dwarf's clothes, as well as a hand-axe under the bed. There are two large stone jars containing coins; one has 24sp in and the other 18gp. Under a craftily hidden stone panel in the floor beneath these jars is a cavity containing Ogrim's personal wealth. This is a small silk bag of 14 gems – total value 1850gp, approximately 200 loose copper pieces, a bejewelled ring worth 150gp and 3 potions (made by the alchemist): *extra healing, clairaudience* and *plant control*, all in tightly sealed metal flasks.

**5F.** The pantry is well stocked with a variety of edibles, including salted meats, wild roots and herbs, dried berries, and some dark bread.

### Basic Alchemical Concepts for AD&D

Most alchemists, when not helping MUs to compound potions, will be furthering their research into the transmutation of metals. Mercury and sulphur are generally believed to be the constituents of all metals: combined in the correct ratios and conditions any metal could be formed from them. The most common (attempted) transmutation is lead into gold.

The alchemists believe that a special agent is required to change the mercury-sulphur composition of a metal into a 'purer' combination. This substance is thought to be a dry powder, and is known as (The) Philosopher's Stone. Because alchemists believe that all substance in the universe is fundamentally of the One Matter, the stone is also attributed with healing properties since men are essentially the same matter as the base metals. So men can be purified on contact with the stone in the same way that lead is believed to be purified into gold.

Understandably, the secret of the manufacture of the stone, if such is ever found, must be kept closely guarded. So all alchemists record their findings in obscure crypticism, mysticism and symbols, which even other alchemists may find unintelligible. However, this effectively halts any real scientific progress alchemy might make, because most of the accumulated knowledge dies with the alchemist.

Alchemical reactions pose similar 'game balance' problems to poison (see *PH*). Once an explosive reaction is discovered, it will not be long before somebody learns to harness its power. This can easily be countered by remembering that the *D&D* alchemists have no easy way to purify the majority of substances. So, because of the impurities present in almost any reagent, alchemical reactions will tend to be, at best, slightly unpredictable. This is reflected in *Table 8* by the random nature of result determination.

### ALCHEMISTS

All types of alchemists tend to be solitary; they do not usually have familiars, are misunderstood by the majority of the populace and rarely have apprentices. Most potential apprentices regard the professions of Magic-User as more promising and worthwhile than that of the alchemist, whose repetitive and fruitless experiment are fraught with danger.

The alchemist (in this scenario) believed that the Philosopher's Stone was composed in a similar way to other metals – with sulphur and mercury. However, the conditions of its manufacture had to be found; the sealed vessel of Hermes was necessary, as well as aqua vitae which was the menstruum in which the Philosopher's Stone would form. The search for the other requirements continued, without success, to the alchemist's death. Ogrim had been furthering the search but also in vain.

### THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

Does The Philosopher's Stone really exist? Whether or not such a stone exists is, of course, in the hands of the DM, but rest assured there should be little chance that a group of puzzled adventurers will discover how to make it simply by tinkering around in the laboratories – especially when many hundreds of true alchemists have failed to do so throughout many centuries of unceasing and methodical research!

### Explanation of Table

Whenever two chemicals or substances that may react are mixed together, cross reference their two types to get a five-figure code. Letters are used, so A=10, B=11, C=12 and so on. The individual digits are the chances in 20 of combustion, explosion, toxication, poisoning and liberation of dangerous gas respectively. Roll 1d20 to determine the result, or

**TABLE 8: ALCHEMICAL REACTIONS**

| Substance Description (Type) | [Code] | Flame | A | C | D | F | G | H | I | L | M | O | P | S | T | V | Z |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Reacting with Type Code: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Acid 1 (lq) | A | 52002 | 43212 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Crystals | C | 54003 | 54212 | 03006. | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Dust or powder | D | 63004 | 54323 | 13006 | 53002 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Aqua fortis/regia (lq) | F | C3001 | 11000 | 43006 | 53004 | 00000 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Gum (lq) | G | A3002 | 11004 | 10003 | 10002 | 32004 | 00000 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Holy Water (lq) | H | 00000 | ** | *** | 00000 | **** | 00000 | 00000 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Inflammable liquid | I | E5001 | 42215 | 43423 | 43424 | 52435 | 21421 | ** | 53213 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Other liquids | L | 00004 | 10212 | 10422 | 10431 | 21436 | 00530 | † | 21423 | 00310 | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Metal†† | M | 10001 | 21004 | 10003 | 11003 | ††† | 10002 | 00000 | 21203 | 10201 | 10000 | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Organic infusion (lq) | O | 44202 | 42324 | 32423 | 21433 | 64424 | 10430 | 00C80* | 43533 | 00201 | 00311 | 31422 | . | . | . | . | . |
| Poison (lq) | P | 81005 | 31006 | 21003 | 21004 | 4200A | †††† | 000F0* | 43003 | 10001 | 00000 | 20002 | 00003 | . | . | . | . |
| Other solids | S | 92004 | 54006 | 42003 | 43004 | 53008 | 21002 | *** | 32005 | 10212 | 21004 | 20312 | 20004 | 53005 | . | . | . |
| Toxic liquid | T | 51035 | 31023 | 42044 | 42054 | 42046 | 10001 | 00K00* | 43033 | 10032 | 10031 | 20033 | 000F1 | 42033 | 31052 | . | . |
| Very reactive solid | V | D4003 | 85005 | 64005 | 74006 | 65005 | 31003 | *** | 98111 | 53214 | 31004 | 64215 | 64008 | 53004 | 64037 | 66004 | . |
| Potion(magical) | Z | 31212 | 42334 | 42214 | 42424 | 43426 | 21531 | 000A0* | 32422 | 10311 | 10312 | 20432 | 200A4 | 20323 | 20062 | 87311 | *DMG* |

* Chance is for neutralising toxic/poisonous substances, or spoiling potions.
** The liquid is weakened to give L.
*** Solids dissolve to form L.
**** F weakened to A.
† Holy Water is spoilt, but no reaction.
†† The 'noble' metals – silver, gold, etc, will not usually react.
††† Dissolves all metals, including the 'noble' metals.
†††† If G does not react, blade venom has been made (ingestive *and* insinuative). The chance of reaction: 1003.
(lq) Liquid (where not stated otherwise).

choose if the DM considers the result to be beyond doubt. Starting from the left side of the code, count upwards, adding each digit to the previous one, to find the range on the die which indicates the specific result. For example, if the first digit in the number code is 4, then a score of 1,2,3 or 4 indicates combustion. If the next digit is 3, then a score of 5,6 or 7 means an explosion has occurred, and so on.

**Speed of Reactions.**
In general, reactions will take 1-6 rounds to take effect. Liquids will react faster than powders which will react faster than lumps, as a rule of thumb. Two solids will not react together unless heat is applied. Heat decreases reaction time by the following percentages: – oil burner: 25%; small furnace: 50%; small furnace (bellowed)/large furnace: 75%; large furnace (bellowed): 90%. Substances subjected to flame will complete any 'reaction' in 1d10 segments. Stirring during the reaction lessens the randomness as the DM sees fit.

**Effects of Reactions**
**No Result**. Roll 1d20 & d%. Chance of liquid product=no liquids/no reagents × 100%; otherwise solid.

1-10 No Effect; reagents not necessarily spoilt but separating liquids/molten may be hard.
11-17 Liquid Product: L
or: Solid Product D
18-19 Liquid Product: I
or Solid Product: V
20 Liquid Product: (1d6) 1-5: T; 6: P,
or: Solid Product: D
Note: A reaction will only give 1 product, +1 for each reagent beyond the 3rd, maximum.

**Combustion**. One, if not both of the substances ignites, spoiling both. If this occurs in a 'sealed container', treat as an explosion instead.

**Explosion**. If the chance of explosion is greater than 4 in 20, inflict 2-8HP damage on all within 4-16'. Otherwise a small explosion inflicts 1-4HP damage on all within 2-12'. A successful save vs breath weapon will halve damage. Those within the minimum range of the explosion will receive double damage.

**Toxication**. The resultant product is a toxic liquid. Toxic liquids cause special damage if consumed; see separate table.

**Poisoning**. The resultant liquid product is a poisonous liquid (nearly always ingestive poison). If consumed, a save vs poison must be made or else death will result.

**Formation of Dangerous Gas**. The two reagents liberate a dangerous gas, and are spoilt. If the chance of gas is greater than 4 in 20, a lethal gas is given off. All those within 1d10 feet of the source when gas is liberated 1 round after the reaction must save vs death and the damage is automatic. 50% of such gases are colourless, 40% are odourless, and there is a 2 in 7 chance of gas being heavier than air, hence collecting in a cloud 1-6 feet deep. The radius of effect increases by 2'/round, and saves are made at +1 per round after initial release. The gas will disperse completely after 19 rounds. If the formation of a dangerous gas is indicated, check the reagents to see if a special gas is formed.

**Special Gases**. Explosive gases are the result of reactions with inflammable liquids, and any flame within the area of effect with explode for 1-6HP damage on all within 5'. There is a 75% likelihood of this extinguishing the flame source (reduce this probability to 50% for torch-sized fires, about 25% for bonfire-sized, etc), but if the flame is not extinguished, it may explode again on subsequent rounds (allow a 1 or 2 round delay). If the gas is lethal, explosions will take the form of sheets of flame inflicting 2-12HP damage on all within 15'. A save vs breath weapon is allowed for both types of these gases; success indicates half damage. 5 out of 6 of these gases are colourless, 2 out of 6 are odourless, but only 1 in 6 are heavier than air.

Potion gases occur when a gas is evolved from a reaction with a potion. Potion gases have properties commensurate with the original potion – eg a red, tasteless potion will probably produce a red, odourless gas – and disperse in 1d6+4 rounds. 2 in 6 are heavier than air. All within the area of effect must save vs poison or else suffer effects similar to those of the original potion, although duration and effect will be only 50% of the norm where appropriate. The save vs poison represents the body's resistance to the gas and cannot deliberately be failed; magical/constitution bonuses will still apply. 'Poison potions' do not form potion gases, just 'normal' reaction results apply.

**Common Substances And Their Types**
Some substances may be available for the players to use in reactions other than the chemicals found in the containers in the hermitage: acid:A; ale, blood, ink:L; foodstuffs: O or S; herbs: solid, but reacts like O; *Holy Water*: H; oil, wine, aqua vitae: I; poison: P; potion, water: treat as L where necessary; most reactions will need to be adjudicated by the DM.

**Quantities of Reagents**
Prudent experimenters may desire to 'test' reactions by only combining a small quantity of each substance, and observing this before reacting the whole lot together. Two small doses of chemicals may only be reacted together if there is a suitable receptacle in which they can be combined and observed. Test for a result on the *Alchemical Reaction Table* as usual. The special results are detailed below:–

**Combustion**. The two chemicals will be seen to quickly burn up. Whether in a sealed or open container makes no difference.

**Explosion**. In an open container, this will be indistinguishable from combustion, above. In a sealed container a small explosion will merely be a sudden flaring up, similar to combustion. If the container fails a saving throw vs normal blow [*DMG* p80] at +5 on the die, a small explosion occurs as for a normal reaction, but with an area of effect of only 1-4'. If a large explosion occurs, treat as a normal small explosion.

**Toxication/Poisoning**. Hardly anything will be observed. Such small amounts of poison will allow +4 on saving throws. There is a 50% chance of the effects of a like volume of toxic liquid to go completely unnoticed if consumed, otherwise saves are at +4.

**Formation of Dangerous Gas.** Any gas formed will disperse in 1-4 rounds and will only spread to a radius of 4'. Saving throws will be made at +2 where appropriate.

Each of the containers listed in the *Containers Table* can be considered to hold 1 'dose' of the substance within. Taking enough for a small test (as above) will not noticeably affect this quantity, since the amount removed will be very small. However, halving a dose should not be encouraged because all the effects on the *Alchemical Reaction Table* assume a 1-dose-each-substance reaction, as well as involving the DM in extensive 'book-keeping'.

Whenever more than two substances are reacted together the following method should be used to determine a result. In general, substances at the top of the list are more likely to react than those at the end. If, for example, 3 chemicals are mixed together, work down the list until one of them is found. This will react with the next highest of the three substance types. If the reaction leaves a suitable product, the lowest (on the list) of the three will then react with that. If both of the two highest chemicals remain unchanged after their reaction, the highest one will now react with the next one down on the list, ie the third chemical, and so on. The list of general 'willingness to react' is: Most ready . . . F-V-I-A-D-C-M-Z-O-T-P-G-L-S-H . . . least ready.

**Effect of Consuming Liquid**
All poisons or poisonous liquids will kill unless a save vs poison is successfully made. Very small amounts allow +4 on the save. (NB poisons brought by the players may be of a category other than 'save or die' as described on page 20 of the *DMG* in which cases the effects of consumption will be as stated therein). Acids, which normally inflict 2-8HP damage on contact, cause double damage if consumed, no saving throw. Aqua fortis or aqua regia inflict 3-12HP damage on contact and likewise double damage if imbibed. Quicksilver (mercury) is treated as a poison if consumed (–4 on die). Toxic liquids (from a *Toxication Reaction Result*) affect consumers as described in *Table 9*.

**Comoran and the Winter Kobolds' Attack**
The raiding party consists of 20 winter kobolds and their Magic-User, the bandit and his assassin companion. There is a 50% chance of the raid being accompanied by 1-3 crebain. The kobolds will split into two groups. The first group, led by Aggle the Magic-User, will try to enter by the top door (**1A**). The second will try to break in through the lower door (**5A**), led by Comoran.

*First Group*
Aggle; HP5; AC9; dagger; spells – *frost fingers, resist heat, darkness, chill metal*. 9 kobolds: HP3,5,2,3,4,5,5,3,4; AC7; mix of light crossbow, axe, short sword, short spear, club, and dagger; 3 will also have torches.

*Second Group*
Comoran and Elsar.
11 kobolds: HP5,4,5,4,2,4,3,3,5,4,3; AC7; armed as group one; 2 have torches.

The kobolds at the top door will be aware of the lashbriar and will fire crossbows at it from short range. Doors will be broken down where possible; a small log will be used as a ram on the lower door. The kobolds are here to cause destruction and get loot – gold or silver – and have no regard for the chemicals. Comoran and Elsar will be looking for more advanced gains; they will briefly check books and parchment and look amongst the apparatus in a (vain) hope of finding the Philosopher's Stone amongst the kobolds' havoc.

If the party flees the hermitage, it will be pursued by two-thirds of the remaining available winter kobolds. If the players hide in the library they will not be discovered by the kobolds who, after about an hour's destructive looting, will set to work on Ogrim's ale . . .

If forced to retreat, the kobolds will reassemble outside and guard the two entrances whilst crows will fly off, at Comoran's command, to summon 1-4 dire wolves as reinforcements. These will arrive after 2 or 3 hours. After the combat, if the party has been overpowered, the kobolds will drag their prisoners/victims' bodies back to their lair, a further 3½ miles into the mountains. □

**TABLE 9: TOXICITY EFFECTS**

| D100 | Save vs poison successful | Additional effect if save failed |
|---|---|---|
| 01-25 | none | 1-4HP damage |
| 26-50 | 1HP | +1-4HP |
| 51-65 | 1-2HP | +1-6HP |
| 66-80 | 1-6HP | 1-6 STR points lost for 1-6 rounds |
| 81-90 | 1-4HP, 1-6 STR loss for 1-6 turns | 1-2 CON points lost for 1-4 days |
| 91-97 | none | 1-8HP regained (only for 1-6 turns) |
| 98-00 | Antidote +3 on poison saves for 2-20 turns | The *next* save vs poison will be successful |

**Note**. Toxic liquids will never reduce a character's hit points to below 1; for each point of damage inflicted that would normally reduce hit points to 0 or less, the imbiber is unconscious for 1 turn. If a system shock roll is failed when the character is about to come round, then death occurs. If any characteristic should fall below 3, unconsciousness will likewise occur and the system shock roll is made at –10% per point below 3.

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Eagerly awaited here is FGU's latest offering – 'Flashing Blades.' A historical RPG set in 17th century France. A must for musketeers. FGU have also threatened to release 12 new V&V adventures in 1985. A re-released Swordbearer is in the pipeline along with another RPG – 'Mad Dogs And Englishmen.' A must for mad dogs.

AVALON HILL have released two modules for Dune containing the usual 'spice'; Monster Coliseum for the ever-expanding Runequest 3 system; Perilous Lands and Book of Tables for Powers & Perils. All good solid stuff for expanding existing games.

Victory Games' latest additions to the James Bond RPG range are 'Thrilling Locations' and 'The Man With The Golden Gun'. TL is designed to expand the campaign world; 160pp. Golden Gun details the exploits of Fransisco Scaramanga – the world's most expensive assasin. Watch out for JB 'action episodes' – there are four board games available (8 years and up) – £8.95.

**Latest Releases** from Grenadier include: Fantasylords 7 (Dungeon Raiders), Fantasylords 8 (Fantasy Knights), Dragonlords 16 (Magic Users), Dragonlords 18 (Female Adventurers) and Dragonlords Dragons 7, 8 & 9 which are Blue, Copper and Bronze. See full lists opposite for details.

Standard Games have taken the plunge and moved into a full role-playing game, it is selling fast and looks to be

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The TUNNELS & TROLLS game system has received a boost by the release of the COLOUR range. This includes the rulebook @ £5.95 and the boxed set @ £8.95. Also available – Sea Of Mystery, Beyond The Silvered Pane, Gamesmen Of Kasar, Naked Doom, Deathtrap Equaliser & Captif D'Yvoire. All A4 size at £1.95.

New items from TSR cover just about every aspect of the D&D range. O2 & X8 for Expert, a revised DM's screen, Dragonlance 4 and two new competition modules for AD & D – C3 & C4. Basic is well served with a new module – B8 – and The Book of Marvelous Magic (AC4). This is a very useful add-on containing 500 new magical items not contained in the 3 boxed sets.

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Dear *WD*,

I have been collecting *WD* since the 'roaring twenties' (those were the days, when adventurers were real adventurers). Lately, apart from *Thrud* and Dave Langford, it has been *Tabletop Heroes* that has caught my attention and the work of Messrs Dever and Chalk.

So far they have yet to raise my pet grievance about figure scale. By this I mean the alarming tendency for fantasy humans to exceed 30mm, especially in the case of the new *Lord of the Rings* figures. It appears that *Citadel* and others delight in making their fighters larger to be more impressive. This continues and the figures get bigger and wider and bigger still. My poor old 'normal' wargames figures shrink into the nothingness of the true 25mm scale.

Also, am I the only one who doesn't like *Citadel's* new *Slotta-Bases*? Although I realise that their coming was inevitable, was this the best idea? I admit it wouldn't be all that bad if they were the right size for *Warhammer* regiments instead of having compulsory skirmishers. But if they were smaller, that is to say the 20mm×20mm recommended in the 'old testament of the gospel according to Priestley', wouldn't that be better?

Yours faithfully,
Andrew Cannon, Perthshire.

*Confused* Warhammer *fans will no doubt be happy to know that* Slotta-Bases *do conform to* Warhammer *frontages, there are just several sizes, including the standard 20mm×20mm and 25mm×25mm. As for figure size, the 25mm scale has long been treated differently by manufacturers. Larger figures do have advantages though: they're easier to paint, convert and characterise and have more detail, facts which I'm sure are appreciated by many gamers. -Ed.*

Dear *WD*,

Firstly, may I mention *Thrud* and his space-faring counterparts, *The Travellers*. These are the first things I read on receiving *WD* and all I can say to any critics is this: show me a funnier strip cartoon than either of these, and I will read it and then laugh quite a bit at the jokes, but only if I understand them. The jokes in *Thrud* and *The Travellers* are sometimes subtle, sometimes not, but nearly always humorous.

Secondly, concerning that spinner of improbable yarns and reviewer of improbable books, Dave Langford. It may not have occurred to most of his critics, but without the fantasy and SF literature such as is reviewed in *Critical Mass*, most, if not all those currently demolishing demons, grinding goblins and munching monsters would probably be attemping to buy Mayfair and sell Old Kent Road instead. Can you imagine the existence of RPGs as we know them if some guy called Tolkien had never written a fairy tale about these little fellows with hairy feet? Literature is the basis for all such games, and Dave Langford does an excellent job, with much wit and humour.

Last, but quite definitely not least, come the two departments that are most often criticised – *Fiend Factory* and *Treasure Chest*. I say it is not too late to salvage them.

In a recent campaign, I included an inept patrol of orcs mounted on wooden two-wheeled scooters similar to those that were all the rage before skateboards came, and indeed went. In the same campaign I included a totally new creature, the gwillion (*WD63*). As an experiment, after the campaign had finished, I asked the players what had been the most enjoyable aspect of it. The answer was a unanimous vote for the bumbling, bungling battalion of scooter-riders. When asked what they had thought of the gwillion, the first answer I received was 'Gwillion, what was that?'

My point is that although a new monster can instil terror into the bravest of hearts there is much more fun and enjoyment to be had from introducing old familiar enemies in a novel, unexpected manner. And my solution to the problem of your two rogue departments? Simple to a seven-brained genius like myself: just merge them together to form one department, don't restrict it purely to *D&D* and stress to the readers that what is wanted is absolutely anything; anything that is novel and original that is.

Yours,
Richard Cronan, Castle Douglas.

Dear *WD*,

It's nice to see some attention to Superhero gaming in recent issues, having played very little fantasy and mainly SHRPGs for the last couple of years. As such, I have a vested interest in free-form gaming and the *Champions* rules (when I've played under rules) since this predates the general release of *Golden Heroes*.

Personally, I don't find *Golden Heroes* to my taste – I don't get on with the concept of rolling random characters when I have a perfectly good imagination of my own, so I've not made any serious study of the mechanics or actually played the game. The person who can claim to be the expert on any game, however, is its designer (or designers). In their column in *WD64*, Simon and Peter dealt with an important aspect of the Superhero genre, the powerful single arch-villain. To do so, they not only have to use the necessary fudging of the rules to allow free choice of a larger number of powers at once, but also have to *cheat* in allowing the NPC an arbitrary number of actions per round beyond the strictures of the initiative rules, which would not be open to the highly-experienced PC. Rules which give NPCs an unfair advantage to produce credible opposition, just because they are to be high powered NPCs are the nadir of the GM's art, on a level with critical hit systems that can only be used by PCs to hurt monsters.

Cheers!
Steve Gilham, Stevenage.

*NPC design is one of the interesting facets of a GM's work. By ignoring the 'rules' does a GM necessarily 'cheat' if he creates an interesting and special NPC? In games depending on elements of fantasy and the creation of an atmosphere, if the end result is challenging and/or fun in play, how much does the route taken to attain this matter? I suspect the point is more a question of GMing style but I'd be interested to hear of other opinions. -Ed.*

Dear *WD*,

I should like to argue a point with adult readers (I'm twelve) about the *Dark Usurper*. I think it is a good thing for beginners like myself (I also play *D&D*) because it helps people to understand role-playing games, just like the best-selling *Fighting Fantasy* books. Although it is not good fun for adult gamers, the less experienced players can get the gist of the game. Also I would like you to print more *Basic D&D* scenarios for youngsters to play and learn from. I have been collecting from issue *52* and it has been improving greatly over the months as have the regular departments like *Fiend Factory* and *Tabletop Heroes*. I would like you to print this letter to show adults that children of 11 and 12 do play role-playing games.

Yours hopefully,
Darren Hair, Roxburgh, Scotland.

Dear *WD*,

My first bone to pick is with the selfishly deranged people who want *WD* to devote precious pagespace to insignificantly obscure games that they just happen to be interested in. This space would have to come from somewhere, so they suggest less room for the RPG giants (*AD&D*, etc). The very idea! These games are so popular simply because they are so good. *AD&D* is quite obviously the best thing that ever happened to the fantasy role-playing scene and to ignore it would be to ignore the majority of the *WD* reading audience.

More positively, I would like to say that I feel that the artwork and layout for *WD* is excellent; Chris Achilleos' cover art is simply a wonder to behold! But please be careful *WD*! The *Hermits and Hags* article (*WD62*) was marred by some over-enthusiastic layout artist. Otherwise, layout is great.

Yours,
Toby Borgeest, Briar Hill, Australia.

*Do not adjust your magazine, there is a fault in the editorial staff, crackle . . . bzzt! -Ed!*

Glub Glub This is Psciaß Prison Complex- Requesting Assist
CHOP
...GRRRRUMMMBBULL...
BEWARE SPEED TRAP
SKREE!
CLICK
COMMANDER ELSON ON TRAFFIC DUTY - WILL DO! AND PRAY THEY DONOT INCURE MY WRATH - THE UNGODLY HEATHENS
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FEFFF
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Zing
I AM YOURS TO COMMAND OH GLORIOUS CAPITAN!
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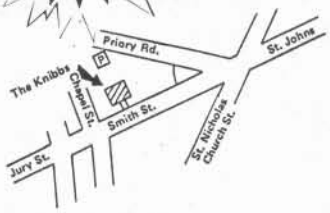


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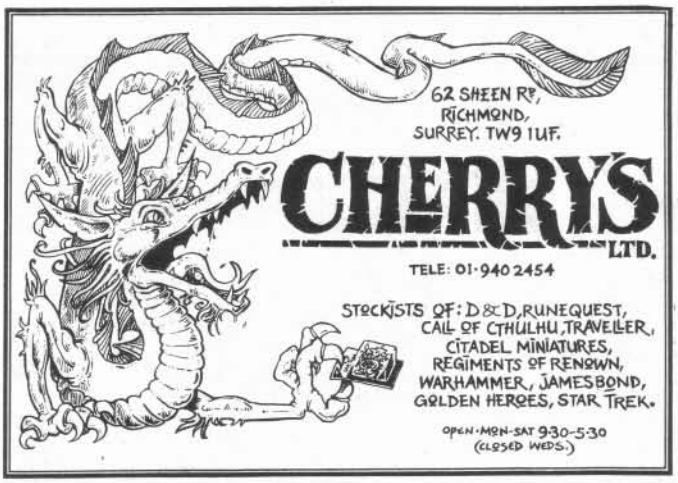


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Fiend Factory *is a regular department for readers' monsters. This issue the environs of . . .*

# THE SILENT HATER

## Monsters and a Short Scenario for AD&D

The adventure ideas in this *Fiend Factory* would be ideally suited for operations based in a marsh-side village such as *Blackmarsh* (detailed in *Dungeon Planner II*).

The outer reaches of any empire are always the most dangerous places to be; a village on the banks of a river which borders a vast uninhabited swamp doubly so. The balance between man and nature continually hangs by a thread, the slightest alteration to the ecology of the area can mean disaster.

The village that the adventurers find themselves in is on the verge of such a disaster. Notable extraordinary denizens that are now under control are the gachragi and the strong toad, both of which still present a slight danger to the fishermen.

### GACHRAGAR
**by Anthony Howcroft**

| | |
|---|---|
| **No Appearing:** | 2-8 |
| **Armour Class:** | 5 |
| **Movement:** | 16" |
| **Hit Dice:** | 4+4 |
| **Treasure:** | J,K,L,M,N,Q,V |
| **Attack:** | 4-16 |
| **Alignment:** | Lawful evil |
| **Intelligence:** | Semi-intelligent |

Gachragi (plural of gachragar) are a ferocious species of fresh water snake. They are found in tarns, lakes, rivers, and occasionally in large, deep wells or pools. Mauve in colour, except for a turquoise fin on the rear of the head and luminous red eyes, they present a foreboding visage. Gachragi group together in small, supportive family groups. However, in times of hardship they will have no scruples about devouring each other.

When in combat a gachragar will begin the fight by using its gaze weapon, a *ray of enfeeblement*, unless it has already exhausted this power (10% chance). The ray has the effect of reducing the strength of the victim by 50% with all consumate results, unless the victim saves by rolling under its wisdom on a d20. The weakness lasts for 5 hours, but the gachragar can only use this gaze weapon once an hour. Following the attack with the *ray of enfeeblement* the gachragar attacks with a savage bite from its many-toothed jaw.

Gachragi are territorial animals and defend their waters with ferocity. Beyond the boundaries of its territory a gachragar will withdraw if seriously wounded, whereas in its domain the creature will fight to the death.

### STRONG TOAD
**by Phil Masters**

| | |
|---|---|
| **No Appearing:** | 1 |
| **Armour Class:** | 0 |
| **Movement:** | 6" |
| **Hit Dice:** | 1+1 |
| **Treasure:** | Nil |
| **Attack:** | Gaze, special |
| **Alignment:** | Neutral |
| **Intelligence:** | Animal |

The strong toad is a large toad which bears a tortoise-like shell of incredible toughness. It radiates a strange, shimmering glow that makes it extremely difficult to focus on its exact position, as well as negating *faerie fire* and *darkness* spells; after each four rounds spent in melee with the strong toad, opponents will become dazzled and confused, attacking at −2 to hit for 3-12 turns subsequently; this effect is cumulative. This glow, combined with the toughness of the creature's shell and its high level of agility, give it +3 on all saves vs attacks that cause physical damage or death. In any case, the strong toad can *regenerate* up to 2 points of damage per round, even when dead, unless the wounds were caused by fire or heat.

The strong toad's oddest power, however, is its ability to project a beam of attractive or repelling force from its eyes. Mirror surfaces do *not* deflect this beam, which moves its target at a 5" movement rate, and does 1-3 points of damage per round to anything that attempts resistance, or 1-6 points per round to anything that is trapped against a solid surface. The gaze has the equivalent of 18 strength; beings fighting it need 17 strength to make any headway against it (¼" move), 18 to achieve 1" movement and exceptional strength to move at any significant rate – add 1" to a 1" base rate for every 10% points; giant (20+) strength allows virtually free movement, although damage is still taken.

The strong toad is omnivorous, aggressive, highly territorial, and naturally very bold.

Sporadic hunts have forced these creatures further away from the settlement, and recently, therefore, the village has become relatively prosperous. Green salamanders, the latest creatures to rise to dominance across the river, have not as yet presented any problems for the village.

### GREEN SALAMANDER
**by Trevor M French**

| | |
|---|---|
| **No Appearing:** | 2-20 |
| **Armour Class:** | 7 |
| **Movement:** | 9"/9" |
| **Hit Dice:** | 3d8 |
| **Treasure:** | Q |
| **Attack:** | 1 bite (1-6) and 2 claws (1-4, 1-4) plus special |
| **Alignment:** | Neutral evil |
| **Intelligence:** | Average |

Green salamanders are humanoid lizard-like creatures, whose slimy blue-black skin is covered in purple spots. They are amphibious and are usually found in swamps or large lakes.

In combat the green salamander will become enraged and secrete acid through its skin-pores. Its whole body will be affected and thus anyone bitten or struck with its claws will also suffer 1-4 additional points of damage and are 50% likely to have the area affected made useless in 1-4 rounds; it will last until *healed*. Once a green salamander has been killed the acid will remain on the skin-surface for 1-4 rounds afterwards and can be extracted at a rate of two flasks per round.

Green salamanders are relatives of

the normal red salamanders and are believed to come from the Elemental Plane of Earth.

---

Some three days before the party arrived a series of attacks on fishing boats began. The first attack left few clues save huge claw marks on the remains of the hull. The second encounter left one man alive who described the creatures responsible; since then they have been called swamp lurkers.

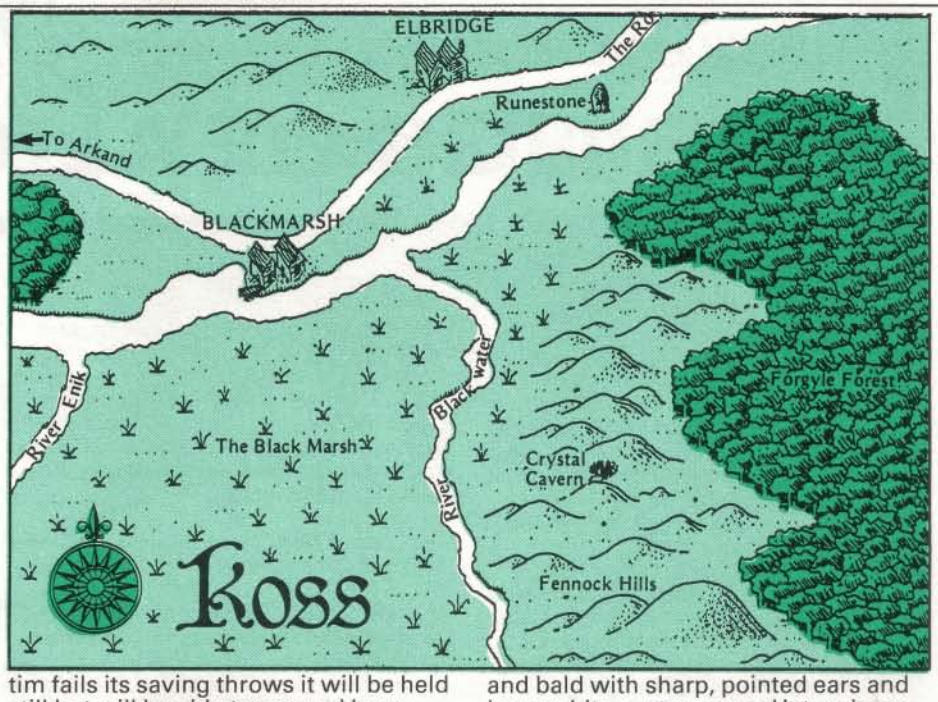
**SWAMP LURKER**
**by Stuart Burch**

| | |
|---|---|
| **No Appearing:** | 1-4/10-20 |
| **Armour Class:** | 7 |
| **Movement:** | 9" |
| **Hit Dice:** | Depends on age (see below) |
| **Treasure:** | Nil |
| **Attacks:** | 2 claws 2-12 each, paralysis |
| **Alignment:** | Neutral |
| **Intelligence:** | Animal |

Swamp lurkers are mainly found in swamps but sometimes at night they wander on to drier ground. It has been known that sometimes these creatures raid farms attacking livestock for food.

Swamp lurkers are humanoid in shape and about 9-10 feet tall. They are covered in a mass of slimy green hair. Females are about 7-8 feet tall. Young are born from giant frog-like spawn, and are serpent-like in shape, green in colour. Their hit dice depends on their age; 1 year 1d8+1; 2 years 2d8+2; 3 years 3d8+3; 4 years 4d8+4; 5 years 5d8+4.

Swamp lurkers will live together as a small tribe of about 10-20 creatures. Although they are of animal intelligence, communicating in grunts and howls, characters of 16+ intelligence could try and communicate using sign language with a 60% chance of success. When encountered as wandering monsters they will usually be a hunting party. A common habitat is caves especially if they are near a swamp. When attacking prey, they first use their claws. The poison is made by an organ in their body which after 1-6 uses takes 12 turns to replenish. A saving throw will show that a character is either immune to the poison or will die in 1-6 turns. The paralysing stare is caused by their 2 red eyes which will hold still any victim unless a saving throw is made. If the victim fails its saving throws it will be held still but will be able to see and hear what's going on around him. For every point of constitution there is a 2% chance per turn to look away. Any victims can be bought back to normal when the lurker has been killed.




Because of their colour and likelihood of rising out of the swamp suddenly (able to breathe underwater as well as on land) they suprise on 1-4. The strength of these creatures is 16 plus. When travelling through swamps it is possible to see a small current of water and air bubbles indicating these creatures walking along the bottom of the swamp.

---

As yet the the motive for these attacks is still unknown. The reason behind the lurkers' actions are twofold, but both are a result of one creature's arrival in the area. The silent hater has driven off the more stupid lurkers by preying on their young and killing the natural food of the creatures. The lurkers are simply responding to it by migrating and finding new sources of food – the villagers.

**SILENT HATER**
**by John R Gordon**

| | |
|---|---|
| **No Appearing:** | 1-8 |
| **Armour Class:** | 8 |
| **Movement:** | 12" |
| **Hit Dice:** | 1+1 |
| **Treasure:** | Variable |
| **Attack:** | 1-3, 1-3, sting 1-4 plus paralysis |
| **Alignment:** | Chaotic evil |
| **Intelligence:** | Low-average |

Silent haters inhabit dark, dank places. They hate all light and goodness, and despise all life. They seek to ambush and kill creatures, and then to suck their corpses dry of blood. The hater has a point on the tip of its tail containing a weak paralysing potion which is effective for 1-12 turns. Haters are small, being only 3' tall, and are revolting in appearance. Their bodies are thin and seem emaciated, their skin is pallid and virtually transparent. The head is lumpy and bald with sharp, pointed ears and large white, watery eyes. Haters have lipless, shrivelled mouths, containing a single hollow tooth with which they suck blood. All have 120' infravision and a keen sense of smell. Hands and feet are webbed, which allows the hater to cross impassable marshes at only half speed.

If three or more haters concentrate together for 3 rounds, then a *fear* spell will be spontaneously generated.

Haters can cast a *silence* spell at will, in one segment, which will endure for as long as the creature desires, or until it is killed. *Dispel magic* breaks the silence for at least 1 round, (after which time it can be resumed). Haters can 'talk' telepathically to each other, as well as using the common tongue. *Silence* prevents the casting of most spells and obviously prevents speech.

---

The adventurers may wish to assist the villagers, but if they do the reward in cash will be small. The solutions could be to either eliminate the swamp lurkers, or to attempt communication with them (see under swamp lurker) and act in concert with them. The party should not know of the existence of the silent hater unless the lurkers tell them or they encounter one. The other inhabitants of the swamp will take a gastronomic interest in humans entering their domain. □

*Treasure Chest* is a regular department for readers' ideas on *AD&D*.

# THE RINGS OF ALIGNMENT

## Five Artifacts from Myth and Legend by Graeme Drysdale

According to legend, the Gods of Neutrality once forged five great rings of power to bestow permanent equilibrium onto the Earth and its surrounding planes. The rings represented each type of ethos: law, chaos, good, evil and neutrality and while one ring has enough power to hold at bay any other alignment, two rings wielded together by one alignment could be devastating.

All the rings are simple bands of the finest mithril and are perfect in all respects, being of godly rather than mortal manufacture. They radiate magic if detected for and all act as +4 *Rings of Protection* and may be combined with magical armour as well. Their locations on the Prime Material Plane are unknown but all are guarded by the souls of their previous owners.

**The Ring Of Good (Foebane)**
Foebane was previously owned by King Angarad, The Lion. The ring is so powerful that any evil or neutral person touching it will be transformed to neutral good in three melee rounds (no save). It can *detect evil* in a 20' radius and will always guide its possessor to the most powerful opponent in combat. When in combat the ring glows as a *continual light* spell. If the command word is known it will produce an invisible field in the shape of a longsword, emanating from the wearer's ring hand. This force can be used as a +5 *Longsword* which does 1-12 (+5) points of damage; any non-magical weapon or armour touched by it turns to dust (no save). The ring gives the wearer a permanent 75% magic resistance while worn; it can cast up to two d8 *lightning bolts* per melee round (when not using it as a sword), up to five a day, and gives double *protection from evil* on the wielder.

**King Angarad** (Guardian of the *Ring of Good*); AC-8; HTK95; LVL14; NG; Ranger; STR:18/52; INT:16; WIS:17; CON:16; DEX:15; CHA:18; *Ring of Good; +2 Plate Mail, +3 Medium Shield.* Spells: (Druidic) *Speak with animals, detect magic, heat metal, cure light wounds.* (Magic-User) *Charm person, ventriliquism, invisibility.*

**The Ring Of Evil (Souleater)**
Once owned by the Lord of Darkness, Souleater is utterly evil and corrupt. Unlike its rival, Foebane, any non-evil person touching it must save vs magic or have its soul eaten by the ring: affected characters may never be *resurrected, raised* or *reincarnated.* If the character makes their save, the ring will drain 2 energy levels. The ring can cast 5 *darkness 15'r* per day and produce a *Sphere of Annihilation* once per month. The ring may produce a forcefield the shape of a longsword from the wielder's ring hand, if the command word is known. The sword is +5 and does 1-12 (+5) points of damage. If non-magical armour or weapons are touched by the weapon, they smoulder, blacken, and fall to dust. The ring gives a 60% magic resistance to the wearer and infravision to 90'. The wielder can also cast eight *magic missiles* per round up to a total of forty missiles per day or up to two *flame strikes* per day. The sword must not be in use for this function.

**The Lord of Darkness** (Guardian of the *Ring of Evil*); AC-6; HTK45; LVL13; NE; MU; STR:12; INT:18; WIS:15; CON:15; DEX:18; CHA:14; *Ring of Evil; Bracers of Defence AC2.* The DM should determine the spells he has memorised.

**The Ring Of Chaos (Freebearer)**
Freebearer once belonged to the Princess of Meldavor, Celadon the Fair, a female elf of immense beauty and power. At a command it sprouts magical fire from the wielder's hands as an 11th level *burning hands* spell, twice per day. It can also *detect law* in a 20' radius. Any person touching it immediately becomes chaotic but retains their original prime ethos. The ring can produce a force field in the shape of a longsword from the wielder's ring hand. The sword is firey, +4 and does 1-10 (+4) points of damage. The ring gives a 55% magic resistance and +4 on saving throws vs fire. It also permanently raises the character's DEX and CHA to the maximum for the character class and increases STR and INT by 1 point. The wielder may cast a d8 *fireball* per round for a maximum of five *fireballs* per day. Finally, it changes the possessor to an elf within 6 months if worn.

**Celadon the Fair** (Guardian of the *Ring of Chaos*); AC-9; HTK50; LVL11/5; CN; MU/Fighter; Elf; STR:16 (18/00); INT:18; WIS:11; CON:15; DEX:19; CHA:18; *Ring of Chaos; Elven Chain, Shield* +5, *Gauntlets of Ogre Power.* The DM should determine any spells.

**The Ring of Law**
The *Ring of Law* has no name. It was owned by Beraphon of the Bell. Those of alignment other than lawful will be changed to law from its touch in three turns. The ring enables the wearer to *detect lies.* It can also *detect chaos* in a 20' radius. At a command it will glow so brightly that any looking upon it (120' radius) must save vs magic or be blinded for 1-4 rounds. Its major powers allow it to produce a force field in the shape of a longsword emitting from the wielder's ring hand. The sword is +4 and does 1-10 (+4) points of damage. It glows white in combat and the wielder can use it to direct a *cone of cold* cast by an 8th level Magic-User but only once per day. The ring conveys a 65% magic resistance on the wearer and +4 on saving throws vs cold. The wielder may also cast an *ice storm* per melee round, for a maximum of five a day and transform any living person to ice if they are touched (a saving throw vs petrification prevents this).

**Beraphon of the Bell** (Guardian of the *Ring of Law*); AC-7; HTK45; LVL13; LN; Monk (Master of Winter); STR:17; INT:12; WIS:19; CON:15; DEX:17; CHA:12; *Ring of Law; Cloak of Protection* +3.

**The Ring Of Neutrality**
At its time of loss, the *Ring of Neutrality* was in the hands of Arvo the Oaken, one of the few Archdruids. This ring is probably the most important: it sustains equilibrium. Any being touching it must save vs magic or be *gated* to another plane (without the ring). Only absolute neutrals can wear it and use its full powers. It has the following power only, though it is extremely powerful. Any being of any alignment who comes within a 30' radius of the wearer, whether *invisible* or on another plane, is totally immobilised and unable to move (no saving throw). The ring wielder may then question the individual. If he thinks that the person intended no harm, he may let him go. If the person intends otherwise, the ring wearer may do as he thinks fit to restore equilibrium. The main concern of the ring wearer is that of keeping neutrality whole. However, although it also gives a 75% magic resistance to the wearer, the ring only operates when the owner is awake. Whilst asleep the wearer will have many guards to make attack difficult, but not impossible.

**Arvo the Oaken** (Guardian of the *Ring of Neutrality*); AC-5; HTK90; LVL13; N; Archdruid; STR:12; INT:15; WIS:20; CON:16; DEX:16; CHA:17; *Ring of Neutrality;* +5 *Leather Armour,* +2 *Cloak of Protection.* Spells and guards should be determined by the DM.

**Combining Two Rings**
If two rings are combined, the following happens: not only does the person gain full benefits from both rings, but the power of each ring doubles. As this is combined with another ring of similar powers, the person becomes four times more powerful than if he had one ring. It is strongly suggested that you, as the DM, ensure that this does not happen. If it does, then it is up to you to destroy the person concerned, as they represent a danger to mankind.

If two opposing rings are combined (good/evil; law/chaos), then a mighty explosion will create a void in the Prime Material Plane where *all* the rings *and* the life forces of those owning them will be sucked in and lost for a great time. Those who owned them will become spirits who will protect the rings from new adventurers, should they ever be found again. □

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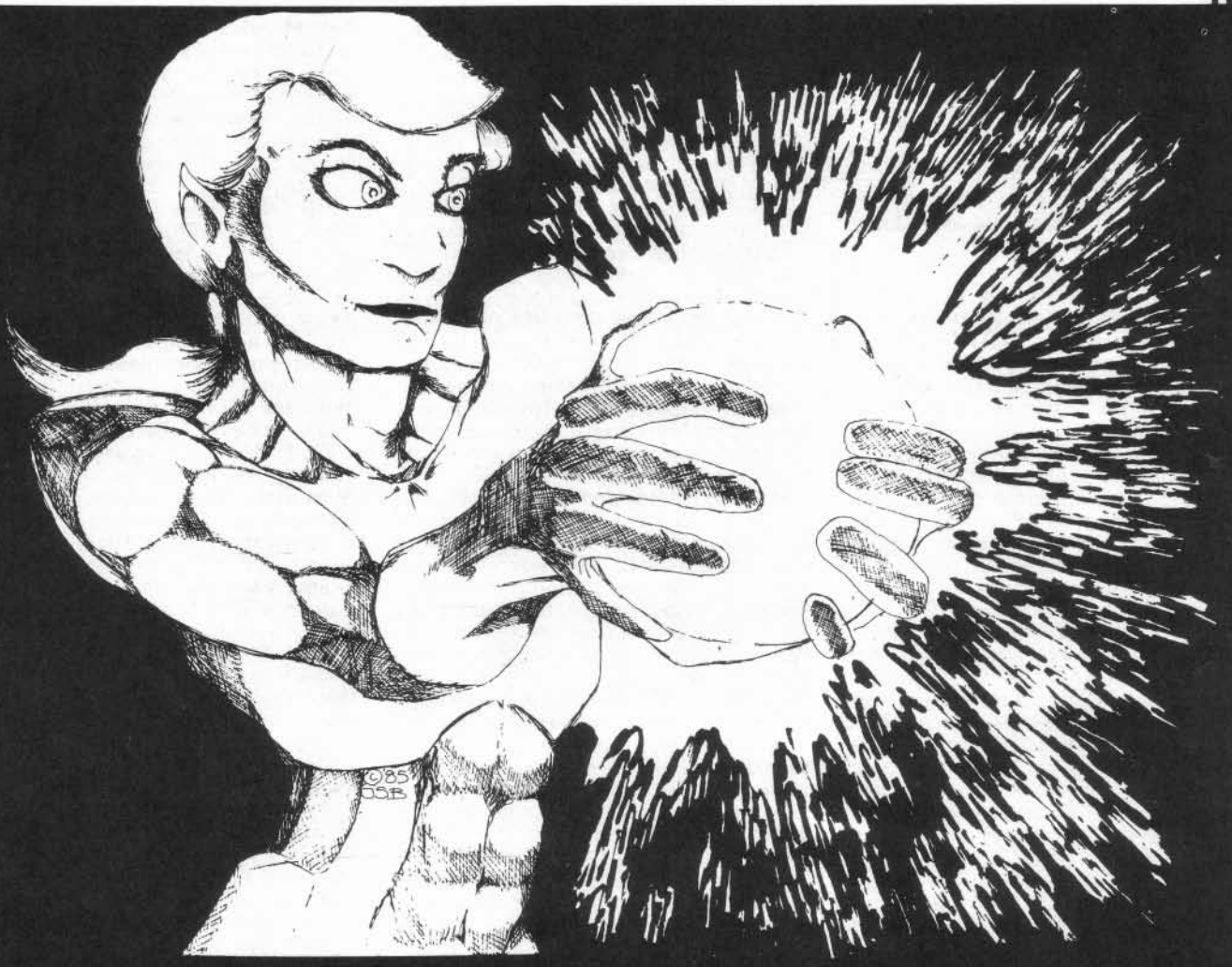

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# OPEN HOUSE

March 16th/17th, 1985, saw the second of *Citadel Miniatures'* 'Open Days', held at their spacious factory in Eastwood, Notts. The event attracted well over 2,000 gamers who witnessed and took part in a myriad of activities including *Warhammer* battles, painting competitions, fancy dress and combat displays. *Citadel* took the opportunity to unveil new ranges and products, many of which are innovative developments in a hobby that appears (despite recent price increases) to be going from strength to strength.

The first of the official *Lord of the Rings* figures were on show in the now familiar blister packs. Many of the new range are available as mounted and foot figures which allows for their use in both dungeon and wilderness/campaign settings. They are exceptionally fine castings, leaning more towards a classical interpretation of Tolkien's characters rather than the featureless cartoon-like figures of previous *LOTR* ranges by other manufacturers. Prices start at around £1.95 per pack (foot figure, mounted figure and horse) – expensive by most standards, but inescapable due to high licensing royalties.

One of the more controversial developments at *Citadel* is their production of 60mm plastic models. The *Fighting Fantasy* range of fighters and monsters, moulded in hard polythene, come with a selection of heads, shields and weapons, and are designed to the same high standard as *Citadel's* 25mm lead ranges. Plastic fantasy models have had a poor reputation in the past, and deservedly so, but these new 60mm's are in a class of their own and will undoubtedly encourage youngsters to take up role-playing or fantasy wargaming as a hobby. For us old lags, the introduction of plastics will have many advantageous spin-offs. *Citadel* plan to make full use of their injection-moulding equipment to produce plastic shields, weapons and possibly flags and standards for existing 25mm ranges. New 25mm's will be moulded with lugs on their left arms to accept press-on plastic shields, the shields being plain on one side and featuring a device on the other. The permutations then become endless when you wish to to form armies; figures with totally different arms and armour can be given identical shields to regiment them into one unit, or the arm lug can be filed off to depict a figure without a shield. Consider the work involved when you want to remove a shield from a figure where the shield is an integral part of the miniature's arm, and you can appreciate the flexibility of the new system.

Painted shields and banner devices are often the most eye-catching feature of a well-painted miniature, but few of us have the artistic flair or steady hand needed to produce stunning miniature heraldry. In response to this frustration, *Citadel* are to bring out sheets of coloured shield and banner transfers specifically designed to be compatible with their figures and their *Warhammer* regiments, the first of which should be available as you read this. The recent introduction of *Slotta-Bases* was met with mixed feelings by many figure gamers, the most common criticism being the problems of integrating the new larger bases with existing figure collections. In response to this, *Citadel* have produced a variety of additional *Slotta-Bases* for cavalry and monsters as well as round and hexagonal bases, which will enable figures to be grouped together differently or used instead of counters in certain board-games. The event also saw the launch of a new magazine – *The Citadel Journal* – devoted almost exclusively to fantasy models and modelling. The first issue of this quarterly magazine included full colour photographs, articles on painting by Simon Cass and John Blanche, *Warhammer* amendments, a reader's page and a competition. The covers include a full colour card cut-out building in 25mm scale for use with tabletop gaming, and at £1.50 it is very good value for monev.

**This Month's Photographs**

The standard of entries submitted to the Open Day painting competition was exceptionally high which made our task of judging the winners in each category very difficult. However, winners were chosen, some of which we are featuring in this month's photo page.

*Fig 1* shows the winning entry in Sunday's Best Diorama class. Those of you who wish to construct your own diorama would do well to examine the detail put into this 'Goblin Chariot' scene, and take note of the realistic plant life (wire and *Milliput* bullrushes), muddy pond (fibre glass resin) and strip of untrampled grass in the middle of the cart track. It is this attention to fine detail that won Kevin Adams first prize.

*Fig 2.* This is the trophy that we awarded for the figures we judged to be 'Best of the Show'. It features some of *Citadel's* latest chaos warriors in combat with dwarfs in the grounds of a ruined church. All the figures were painted with enamels and acrylics, with the ruined masonry scratch-built from polystyrene ceiling tile and plasticard squares.

*Fig 3.* The winner of the Best of the Show trophy was Nick Sewell for his *Warhammer* regiment of goblins – shown here in all their chaotic glory. This unit was one of many entries that Nick submitted, all of which were of exceptionally high standard, securing for him a well-deserved win.

*Fig 4* shows the winner of the Best Diorama class on the first day of the show. Bill Sprint's 'Barrow-Wights' were well painted and imaginatively based among a group of 'standing stones', which consisted of polished pebbles set into a tetrion base and decorated with treasure chests (note the hobbit in the foreground). Of all the new *Lord of the Rings* figures, the barrow-wights proved to be a definite best-seller at the Open Day, snatched up by fantasy wargamers and rolegamers alike.

*Fig 5.* The Overall Winner of the show for a consistently high standard of work was Simon Cass, whose 'Dark Elves' are shown here. One of the most common faults that spoiled many well-painted entries was the conspicuous lack of attention paid to bases. Note how well both Simon and Nick finished the bases of their two prize-winning units.

*Fig 6.* Here we see one of the new 60mm *Fighting Fantasy* plastic figures, painted and converted by *Citadel* staff artist David Andrews. Not bad for a toy, eh! Fantasy modellers may well find this new range to be a source of fresh inspiration as the larger scale and 'soft' material offers greater scope for conversion and elaborate decoration than is possible with the smaller 25mm lead ranges.

*Figs 7* and *8* were not among the prize winners, but P Benson's 'Rohan Lancer' (*ME23*), and Pete Prowl's 'Gandalf on Shadowfax' (*ME11*) illustrate the detail and animation that makes *Citadel's* new *LOTR* range something special. □

Fig 1

Fig 2

Fig 3

Fig 4

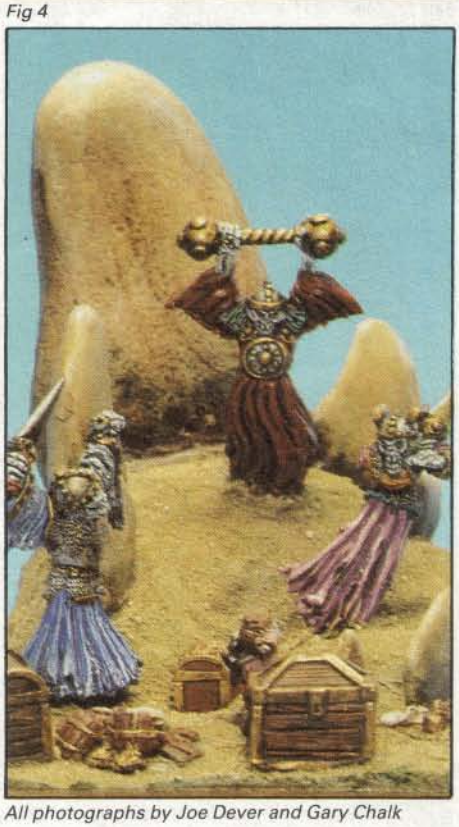


Fig 5

All photographs by Joe Dever and Gary Chalk

Fig 6

Fig 7

Fig 8

# CRASIMOFF'S WORLD

## BRITAIN'S BIGGEST!

CRASIMOFF'S WORLD is a Play-By-Mail game of exploration and adventure. As a player you assume the role of leader in a band of brave adventurers set out from a small town knowing little about the surrounding countryside apart from a few rumours. As you travel you will learn more about the land and it's secrets, encountering other parties, races and creatures. To survive you must rely on your wits and swords.

Our team of professional gamesmasters have developed and run the world for over five years, constantly updating and improving. Over 1000 player parties currently operate in this ongoing fantasy campaign making Crasimoff's World the most popular Play-By-Mail game in the UK.

*"The effort the gamesmaster puts into each turn never ceases to amaze me. Most players find themselves offered a different scenario each turn, or find that a new twist has happened to an existing adventure."*

**WHITE DWARF**

*"So, with its regular newsletter, Crasimoff's World is a friendly, efficient, and relatively cheap game to play, and if you wish to try a commercial PBM game with a distinctly D&D game-ish flavour, I would unhesitatingly recommended it."*

**IMAGINE**

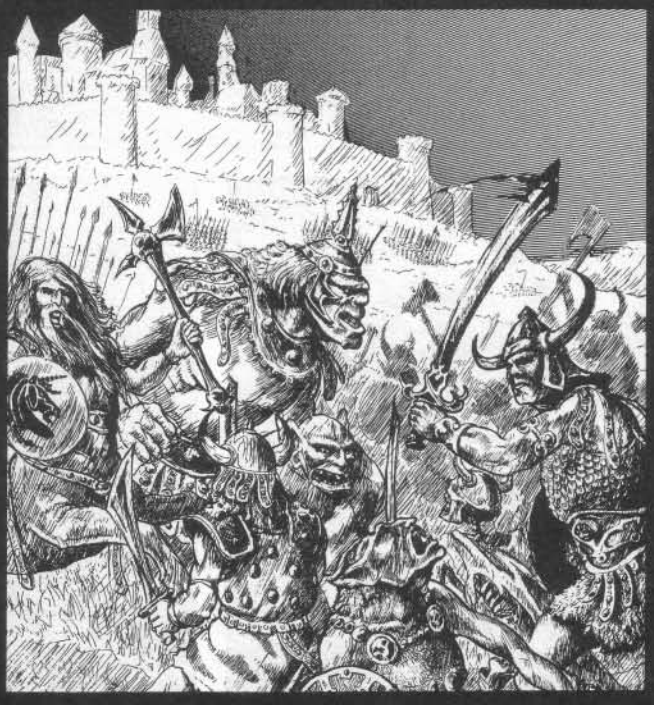
To enrol in Crasimoff's World send £5.00 cheque/PO/international money order payable to KJC Games. For this you will recieve the rulebook, set-up material, first three turns and a copy of our latest newsletter. Future turns are £1.50. Send to KJC Games, 5 Vicarage Avenue, Cleveleys, Blackpool, Lancashire. FY5 2BD. European players welcome, rates are same as for the UK.

# EARTH WOOD

In EARTHWOOD, twenty-five players compete to be the ultimate ruler by controlling all the developed cities, either singularly or with an alliance. A typical game will last about 18 months with the first knockouts usually starting after six months.

Each player is either a king of a fantasy race or powerful charismatic character. Your character or king controls several groups each of which is totally independent of each other. You can recruit trolls, wildmen and others into your armies, and even control powerful creatures such as dragons. Your characters will capture and control cities, upon which you can spend gold to improve security, increase your workshop's production, build defences and maintain and enlarge your army. With gold your wizards undertake magical research, learning new spells. Spies search out enemy strongholds and then attempt acts of sabotage, theft and assasination. These are just a few options available to a player in EARTHWOOD.

EARTHWOOD is computer moderated but the turn sheets and replies are written in plain English so that you can easily understand them. No need to look through complex charts and code books to understand this game.



**KJC GAMES**

To enrol in Earthwood send £5.00 cheque/PO payable to KJC Games. For this you recieve the rulebook, setup and first three turns. Future turns are £1.50. Send to KJC Games, 5 Vicarage Avenue, Cleveleys, Blackpool, Lancashire. FY5 2BD.

## This Month's New Releases

From *Games Workshop* comes *Legacy Of Eagles*, a ripping adventure for *Golden Heroes*, and the first of many scenarios to come. The *Chaosium* have three new products: *Masks of Nyarlathotep*, the *Call of Cthulhu* screen, and the *Superworld Companion*. *GDW's Traveller* range is expanded by the adventure *Signal GK* and the alien supplement *Zhodani*. *Free City of Krakow* (£7.95) supports the company's only other major system, *Twilight 2000*. *Iron Crown's* excursion into the future RPG field begins with their *Tec Law* system (basically *Rolemaster* in outer space). For *Rolemaster* players there is *Creatures and Treasure* – not surprisingly this is both a monster book and selection of artifacts and valuables. *West End Games' Paranoia* gets the *Paranoia Screen* and its first scenario, *Adventure Orange*. The latter forms the beginning of a series: *Adventure Orange*, *Adventure Yellow* and *Adventure Green*. No prices yet for the adventures, but the screen will be £5.95. *Pacesetter*, designers of *Chill*, *Star Ace* and *Timemaster* have moved temporarily away from the RPG market with their two new releases, the *Chill Boardgame* and *Wabbit Wampage*. The former no doubt will have vampires, ghouls and other sundry were-creatures popping up everywhere, the latter will be a cartoon-based 'fun' game. Staying with cartoons, *Steve Jackson Games* follow up *Toon* with *Toon Strikes Again*, and for *Illuminati* another expansion set. *FASA's Star Trek* seems to be the most added to system after *D&D*; this month's new adventure is *The Outcasts* and will be £6.95.

## GETTING VENTURESOME

*Runestone* is the latest computer adventure to be produced by *Games Workshop*. Available for the *48K Spectrum* it incorporates a programming technique called 'Venturescope'. The whole upshot of which is that you get something like *Lords of Midnight* combined with the versatility of inputting commands in the form of sentences.

## DWARF GROWS UP

The circulation of *White Dwarf* is fast approaching 50,000, with the popularity of the magazine growing by about 10% every month. Due out soon is *The Best of White Dwarf Scenarios III* which will contain the popular *AD&D* city of *Irilian* (featured in *WD42-47*). Also in the pipeline is *The Best of White Dwarf Articles III* (including such favourites as the *Necromancer* and *Monsters Have Feeelings Too*).

## KJC'S NEW CAPITOL

*KJC Games* have acquired another major PBM to join their already popular *Crasimoff's World* and *Earthwood* games. *Capitol* is a space warfare and diplomacy game with room for 32 players in each game. Ideal for postal gamers with 9 to 18 months to spare! Rulebooks are £1 and a starter package which includes set-up fee and two free turns will be available for £6.

## FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING

The first releases of the *Official D&D* range of figures from *Citadel* should be available any week now. Supreme being at *Citadel*, Bryan Ansell, says 'These are the best figures we have ever done'. He should know! The blister packs containing the low, medium and high level versions of the same character should be available shortly.

## THE BRITISH GRENADIER

*Grenadier Models UK* are now in full production. Their first two ranges, the official *Call of Cthulhu* figures and *Fantasy Lords*, are available in blister pack form retailing at £1.25. Most packs contain three figures and these are different from those already available in the boxed sets. Also new are the official *Bushido* figures (samurai, ninja, ronin et al).

## AVALON HILL PLANS TAKEOVER

*Avalon Hill UK* have bought *Endless Plans*, the series of floor plans originally produced by *Endless Games*. Initially available in the same format, the intention is to box the whole range at a later date. How much havoc this wreaks with *Integrated Games'* *Complete Dungeon Master* scenario packs remains to be seen.

## NEXT ISSUE

Stand back! You'll need plenty of *Whoom* to join in *Peking Duck*, a tasty adventure for *Golden Heroes* and *Champions*. *AD&D* players will be kept on their toes by *A Murder at Flaxton*, and tied up for hours in *Parlour Game* – a devious article about spiders. For *Call of Cthulhu* there'll be a special appearance of the *Haunters of the Dark*; an article dealing with the various manifestations of ghosts. Social customs in *Traveller* are covered in *Starbase*, whilst *RuneRites* gets involved with barbarian magic and clarifies some points about *RQ3*. With all our regular features as well, it's not an issue to be missed!

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

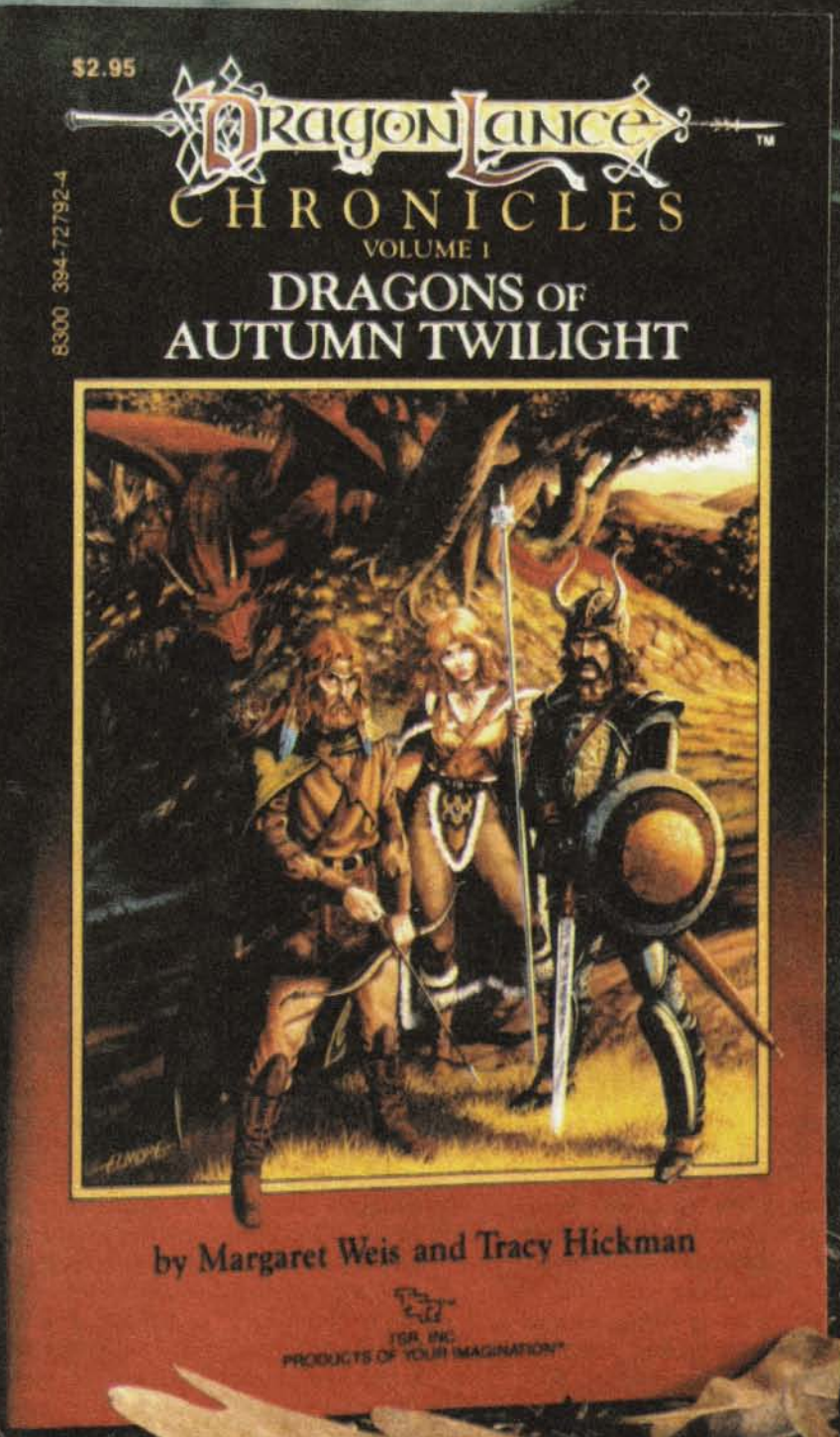
We wish to apologise for the slightly misleading nature of our advertisement that appeared in issue 64 announcing the opening of our shops in Newcastle and York. Unfortunately – in the rush to meet printer's deadlines – the copy was not proofed properly.

We must state categorically it was never our intention to mislead our customers and we are deeply sorry for any inconvenience caused.

*GAMES WORKSHOP LIMITED*

**GOBBLEDIGOOK by Bil**

# EXPERIENCE A LEGEND IN TSR'S FIRST AD&D™ FANTASY NOVEL!

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## CLASSIFIED

*All classified ads must be prepaid at the rate of 15p per word, display ads £4.50 per scc (incl VAT). Please send copy and payment to* White Dwarf, *27-29 Sunbeam Rd, Park Royal, London NW10, making cheques/POs payable to* Games Workshop Ltd.

White Dwarf *regrets that it cannot be held responsible for financial transactions resulting from small ads. Readers are advised to take appropriate precautions before parting with any money.*

**GAMES DAY '85**
**Horticultural Hall, Sept 28-29**
Clubs, groups, players, etc. If you have a fantasy, war, computer, board or even outrageous games that you would like to run at *Games Day*, please write now with details of your proposed event and any special requirements for early allocation of space. We also need gophers to help on the admin side (London residents only please). Please write to: *Games Day, Games Workshop Ltd*, 27/29 Sunbeam Road, London NW10.

**IMAZINE**
The fanzine for role-playing gamers who don't need to be told how to think. Send 50p for a sample copy to: Paul Mason, 16 Corncrake Close, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B72 1HY.

**Sanio, The Fantasy PBM.** This game has now been running successfully for over five months and is busy trying to find new players to populate its now expanded map. Over 100 creatures and 30 herbs have been created and many towns and ruins. Any person stating that he saw this ad in *White Dwarf* will receive two free returns and the first four will receive six free. Apply for free rulebook and start up to: *Lorewarden Games*, 23 Breckhill Road, Woodthorpe, Nottingham.

**The Halfling Paint Shop.** Quality figure painting. For prices, SAE to: J Davies, 64 Eastbury Road, Northwood, Middx. ☎ (09274) 22750.

**High Quality** figure painting by artist. Send £2.50 for sample figure, details and price list. Pete Harrison, 46 Grosvenor Cres, Warmsworth, Doncaster, South Yorks DN4 9NL.

**Zine Editors.** We stock decent/indecent zines. If you give ⅓ off cover price, we'll stock it, bulk of 20+ copies. Send samples, advertising rates to *TATTLE*, Windermere, Cherrywood Road, Loughlinstown, Co Dublin, Ireland.

**Wanted.** Games enthusiast for full-time PBM gamesmaster position in London. Contact: George Campbell, 189 Balham High Road, London SW12.

**Fantasy Armies** (various systems), regiments and individuals painted to personal requirements. Varnishing and basing free. Top quality, good rates. Send large SAE for details and free sample to: *Quid Nunc*, Willows, Sand Lane, Northill, Beds SG18 9AE.

**Grotzine.** *Monsterous Perversion* lacks two things: artist(s) [paid in infamy] and access to cheap printing. 2nd hand duplicator possibly. Peter Blanchard, 4 Holly Acre, Prey Heath, Mayford, Woking GU22 0SL. ☎ (04862) 73747. Issue 1 available for 80p!

**Fantasy Battles.** A new concept in PBM games. Enact out battles in detail, manoeuvring your troops, making battle decisions and deciding the types of units to deploy. Each battle involves two players attempting to gain victory on a detailed plan of the battle area. Fight for control of the strategic Death Valley or battle for the famous Tharg's Crown - this is the ultimate PBM game. A game of great skill and judgement, you are in control of every aspect of your forces and how they are used. Points are awarded for each battle - the names of the eventual winners being printed here! Set up £4, subsequent rounds £1.50. *HPS Promotions*, Pegasus House, 6 Haytor Rise, Coventry CV2 3LE.

**The Green Goblin.** The only credible challenge to *White Dwarf*. (*What!! - Ed*). 40p +SSAE for 40 photoreduced pages. Buy it now from: John Breakwell, 4 Balfour Road, Portsmouth PO2 0DJ, or face the consequences!

**AD&D** modules *A1-A4* for sale. ☎ Leics 609747 to negotiate.

**Sale.** *RQ2* and *RQ3*, most supplements, figures, also *Dragon Pass*. Contact: 22 Woodyard Close, Mulbarton, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 8AS. ☎ (0508) 70109.

**Outpost Mulliphen** is a member of Starfleet Command, an international *Star Trek* organisation. All members receive rank, ID card, assignment, etc. This outpost needs local recruits. Send SSAE to: David Burton, Outpost Commander, 37 Green Way, Eastbourne, East Sussex.

**QUIDNUNC**
Find out about the fabulous Land of Bulbis Tartar by joining the PBM game of *Dragon-Quest*. For information leaflet please send an SAE to: *Quidnunc*, Department A7, 32 Windmill Lane, Southall, Middlesex UB2 4ND.

**Market Madness!** Financial strategy PBM business game. £3.50 covers all 15 turns at 23p per turn. Simon Wade, 236 Kingsway, Huyton, Liverpool. (Game 2 starting soon).

**Painted Fantasy Figures.** Highest quality of painting at reasonable prices, good discounts available. SAE for further details to: A Worsley, 22 Brindley St, Holderness Road, Hull HU9 3BD.

**For Sale.** Much *Traveller* material, *Expert D&D, Talisman, Battlecars, WD32, 38-58.* Offers. Mark, ☎ (0604) 858393.

**For Sale.** Large number of wargames. Send SAE. Mr P Ball, 4 The Mount, Balmullo, Fife, Scotland. ☎ Balmullo 870643.

**Stardate.** The latest issue of this magazine for *Star Fleet Battles* players is the best yet. Send 50p to *Stardate*, 17 Dale View, Grimsby, South Humberside DN33 1RE.

**Homes Wanted.** Giants 60mm, huge bargains - undercoated £2.50, painted £3.50 (+ 50p p&p). With different heads. M Hormung, c/o Adcroft, Wellington College, Crowthourne, Berkshire.

**Sale.** *CoC* £6.50, *Bushido* + character sheets £5.50, *DP2* £2.50, *T&T* adventures, *Judges Guild* play aids + *WD13-60* (in binders as sets of 12). All vgc. Offers. Andrew, ☎ Titchfield 43093 (after 6pm).

**For Sale.** *Indiana Jones* RPG + *IJ1* as new. £10. Jason, ☎ (01) 529 6515.

**Pouches, Purses.** Draw string fabric purses, £1.50. Leather/leatherette pouches, £4/£6. All inclusive of post, etc. Also costumes, cloaks, accessories, etc. *Party Packages*, 160 Hearsall Lane, Coventry CV5 6HH.

**SCI-FI HEAVY ARMOUR**
New range of original 15mm scale designs, cast in resin for all miniatures games. Hovertanks, carriers, support vehicles. SAE for list and details to: March-Tuffley, 92 Sandhill Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk.

**Artwork Contracted.** Dungeon plans, wilderness and world maps, sketches and strongholds, lairs of all descriptions. Drawn to specifications. S Morgan, ☎ Radlett 4354.

**For Sale.** *DMG, PHB, FF, MM* + 2 *AD&D* dungeons and *DMs Screen*. All £25, will not separate. Also *Starter Traveller* £5, *CoC* (2nd Edition) £5, *Thieves World* £9, *Judge Dredd, Warlock, Talisman* £8 (or £3 each). Andrew, ☎ (01) 251 0959.

**Swap.** My *Talisman* for *Middle Earth*. Also *Trollpak* £10 and *Cults of Terror* £6. ☎ Rossendale 212154.

**For Sale.** *RQ3, Traveller Book, Ringworld* and *Ringworld Companion*. All in excellent condition. ☎ (0977) 702950.

**Penfriends Worldwide.** Club formed in 1967, now has 120,000 members aged from 10 to 93 spanning 153 countries. For full details: *IPF* Dept 13, 5 Pilgrim Ave, Immingham, S Humberside DN40 1LG.

**FREE** lolly stick with *Doomed Dwarves' Journal. RQ3, TMP, CoC, T&T*, PBMs and others. News, reviews and death by hanging. Professional printing... 60p including p+p. Hendel, 32 Bracken Road, Darlington, County Durham DL3 9LX.

**Tudor Armoury.** Your personal dagger, sword, axe, helmet, coat of arms. Send design for quote. *Tudor Armoury*, 90 Christchurch Road, Ringwood, Hants. ☎ (04254) 4620.

**Discovered** *Draken Games'* newsletter yet? News, reviews, special offers and a full mail order service. Send SAE for free copy. *Draken Games*, 132 Ramnoth Road, Wisbech, Cambs PE13 2JD.

**PBM, Kings of Steel.** Fantasy campaign. Includes armies, wizards, neutrals, power cards and much more. For details write to: *PBM Games*, 1 University Close, Parrys Lane, Bristol BS9 1AR.

**Space.** Fill a space on your wall with an original science fiction or fantasy illustration. Subjects include robots, droids, space hardware, dragons, demons, warriors, creatures, etc. Also limited edition prints and stationery sets. Design and artwork service available for fanzines and board games. To find out more about these unique designs send a large SAE for information pack to: Roger Waring, *Robots & Rayguns*, 48 Woodbreda Drive, Saintfield Road, Belfast BT8 4HZ, N Ireland.

## HELP!

*Clubs, contacts and events can be advertised once at no charge up to a maximum of 25 words. Further insertions at the rate of 15p per word (incl VAT).*

**AD&D DM** seeks adventurers from the Aylesbury area in search of great treasures. Conditions hazardous. Rob, ☎ Aylesbury 25659 (evenings).

**Wanted.** A not-so-experienced DM to try and help me get a *D&D* adventurers club together. Must live in the Whitstable/Canterbury area. For more details: Ian, ☎ (0227) 263618.

**Sunday Travellers.** Harlow. Delirius needs you - the locks inside our wardrobe are giving way. Even one wookie is enough.

**Read This!** The Rawlins school *D&D* club will end, the MBFWS demands it; infidels will be beated. Get off our turf. From Filthchewer.

**North London.** 2 experienced RPGers in Barnet seek players/clubs nearby. *RQ, CoC* preferred, experience in many others. Carl White, ☎ 441 0561.

**Wejoice** woleplayers of Windsor. Wenounce the wabble and join the Windsor RPG club. Wap with wangers, wabbit with dwuids, wepel weptiles, even weason with werewats. We meet every Tuesday, 7pm at the Windsor Youth Centre. For further details, contact our glorious leader, Steve 'Elric' Sanders, ☎ Slough 20867. PS We also accept players without speech impediments, but no Morris Dancers.

**AD&D.** Please help me! I would like to learn *AD&D* from someone in Watford/Croxley area. Colin (16), ☎ Watford 24168 (after 7pm).

**Help!** *WD 47* and *50* needed urgently. Reasonable prices paid. Matthew Bailey, ☎ Banbury (0295) 720197.

**Wanted.** *Cults of Terror, Griffin Mountain, RQ Companion, Borderlands, RQ* figures, *Wyrms Footnotes 1-14, WD44, 45,* other *RQ* stuff. Brian, ☎ (0888) 68757.

**Anyone? Eastend.** Novices to veterans, willing to play FRP games. *CoC, TFT*, any game. Contact: Simon Sarginson, Cumberland Road, Plaistow E13 8LH.

**Books/Magazines Wanted.** Will pay any reasonable price for Cthulhu mythos based books, in hardback, paperback or magazine format. Contact: Andy King, 106 Belsize Road, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP3 8DQ.

**Wanted.** *Cults of Prax*. Richard, ☎ (0484) 604205.

**RPG Postal Information Exchange.** For more details, send SSAE to: Mark Errington, 2 Evelyn Tce, Oxhill, Stanley, Co Durham DH9 7RN.

**Players Wanted.** Novice or experienced. Required for an existing campaign partially set in *Pavis*. Males & females of 17 yrs in the group. 15 yrs up in Bedford area considered. Contact: Chris Barker, 118 Kimbolton Road, Bedford MK4 19DN. ☎ 59009.

**Swap.** *MERP* book + *Bree* module + boxed *T&T* for *Traveller* or *CoC*. Contact: I Sharp, Bowtrees Farm, Airth, By Falkirk, FK2 8PJ.

**Bournemouth.** Experienced *AD&D/RQ* referee/player in the Kinson area. Have bike, will travel. Martin, ☎ Bournemouth 571513.

**Swap.** I want *MM, WD49-51*. Giving *WD27, 41, 43, RQ* rulebook, *Citadel of Chaos, Warlock of Firetop Mountain, Monster Cards 1*. ☎ Shrewsbury 59875.

**Middlesbrough/Cleveland.** 23 yr old looking for FRP campaign inarea. Anything considered - familiar with most games. Also looking for players for *Magic Realm* (with own amendments), *Down With The King + Gunslinger. 42 Palm Street (off Borough Road), Middlesbrough (after 5pm or at weekends).*

***Help!*** *11 year old AD&D* player seeks DM and players aged 11+. D M Tolley, 10 Lawn Lane, Coven, Nr Wolverhampton, W Mids WV9 5AX. ☎ Wolverhampton 790605.

**Cash** paid for *Cults of Terror, Pavis, Big Rubble, Trollpak*. Full purchase price top. Martin, ☎ (0628) 39211 x5284 (day), ☎ (0628) 29612 (evening). Write: 97 Wessex Way, Maidenhead.

**Eggo Theskin** still lives. Beware White Wizard for he shall destroy you. Answer me if you dare. Long live the Theskins.

**Zines?** Are there any *Traveller* or *Cthulhu* zines out there? Adrian Smith, ☎ (0222) 552975.

**DM** wishing to start a chain of your *D&D* monsters. For further details contact: Frank, 72 Warrington Road, Paddock Wood, Kent.

**Announcement.** Legless the light-fingered alcoholic elf has cheated death yet again! (Narrowly avoiding being redubbed handless). Drinks are on her!

**Male AD&Der** seeks female penpal with similar interests, age 13-14. David Moore, 7 Grimshaw Terrace, Sabden, Nr Blackburn, Lancs BB6 9EL. ☎ Padiham 74134.

**All Clubs.** Please send me details of your RPG clubs. Thanks. Details to: 14 Felden Close, Garston, Watford, Herts WD2 6QW.

**Alton.** Players wanted for new *AD&D (RQ?)* club. Ages 14-16. Sex and experience unimportant. Stuart, ☎ Alton 88773 (evenings).

**Basic D&D** boxed set + *M1* for good condition *RQ*. Contact: Benjamin Hodgson, 22 St Tibba Way, Ryhall, Stamford, Lincs. ☎ (0780) 53503.

**Stamford.** Complete novice (19) wishes to meet GMs and players in the Stamford area. Contact Steve at: 31 Mountbatten Avenue, Stamford, Lincs PE9 1HU. ☎ 53069.

**Chesham, Bucks.** Players wanted to form RPG club. *AD&D, CoC, CW, 007,* etc. Experience immaterial. Paul, ☎ Chesham 772827 (evenings).

**Anyone** want to a *D&D/T&T/Warhammer* playing pen friend. If so, please write to: Gavin Theobald, Fosters House, Hound St, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 3AA.

**Wanted.** *Companion D&D* set and *AD&D PHB*. Swap for *Traveller Books 0-5* and *Supplements 6, 7, 9.* Chris, ☎ (01) 226 9183 (after 6pm).

**Wanted.** Articles and artwork for a new fanzine. Please write to: M Holland, 17 Brybur Close, Whitley Wood, Reading RG2 8HN. Don't forget an SAE!

**Citadel Miniatures Wanted.** Figures from *First Compendium* preferred. Gary, ☎ Halesworth (09867) 2231 (between 7pm and 10pm).

**Bangor, N Ireland.** 18 yr old female player (*T&T, AD&D,* will try anything) seeks group of players in area. Michaela, ☎ Bangor 462705.

**Shepton Mallet Area.** Whither yon questers, adventurers, tricksters, for *D&D* or other FRP. ☎ (0749) 830087.

**D&D Chelmsford.** Kelvin Clash the first level Cleric, sole survivor of the Hylands adventuring party, requires a party or even a club of worthy adventurers. Russell, ☎ (0245) 81217.

**Oxford RPGer** needs fairly experienced 15+ players/Dms. I have *Golden Heroes, AD&D, MERP, Warhammer* and more. Willing to learn others. Michael, ☎ Oxford 340944.

## CLUBS

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**Contact:** Robin Appleton, ☎ 061 793 0506 after 4pm, weekdays.

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**Warriors of the Shadow Realm**
**Games:** Any.
**Place:** Horley Youth Centre.
**Time:** Sundays 2-6pm.
**Comments:** All welcome.
**Contact:** Vincent, ☎(0293) 784404.

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**Nothants RPGers Association**
**Games:** *AD&D*, occasional variants. Realism stressed, miniatures used.
**Place:** Varies, but usually in Northampton.
**Time:** Varies, at least weekly.
**Comments:** 17+ age restriction. Different DMs (their worlds and campaign) each take a different evening. Currently Sundays: a well-run and interesting world moderately based on the Harnian Literature.
**Contact:** Chris Lampert, 28 Larch Lane, New Duston, Northampton. ☎ (0604) 582894.

**BLYTH**
**Northumbrian Adventurers Guild**
**Games:** *AD&D*, others.
**Time:** To be decided.
**Place:** Probably at Blyth Sports Centre.
**Comments:** Small group willing to expand!
**Contact:** Mike McGovern, ☎ Blyth 360577, Dave Cannon, ☎ Ashington 854790 or Alisdair Barton, ☎ Blyth 366881.

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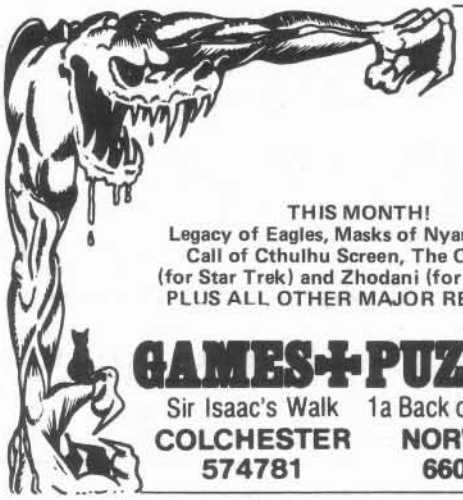

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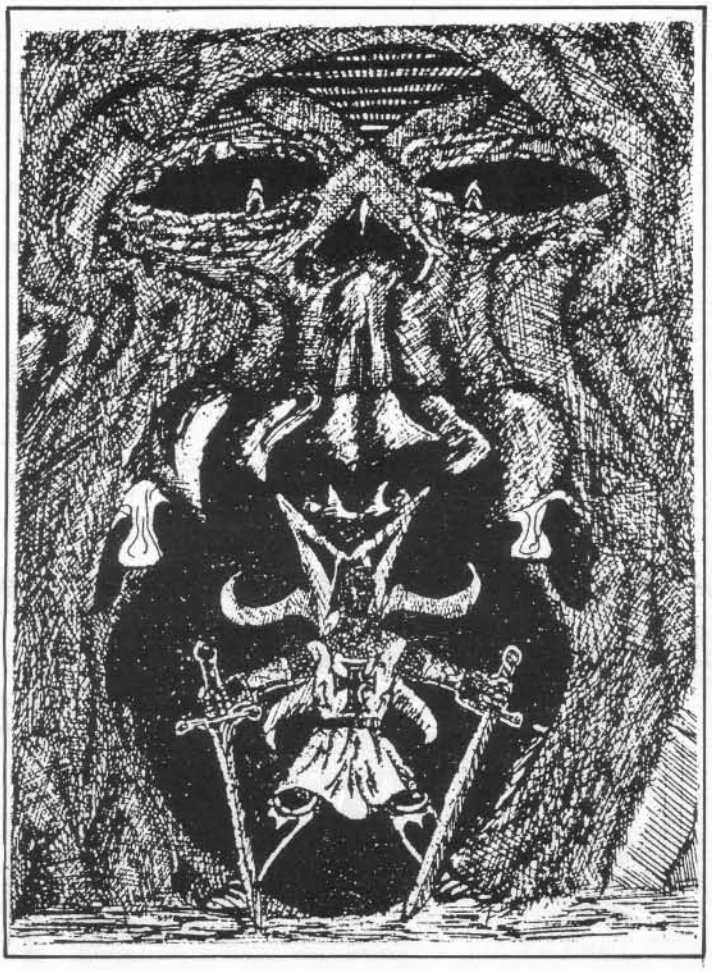

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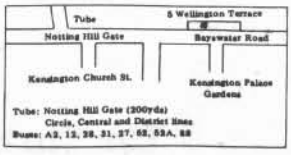


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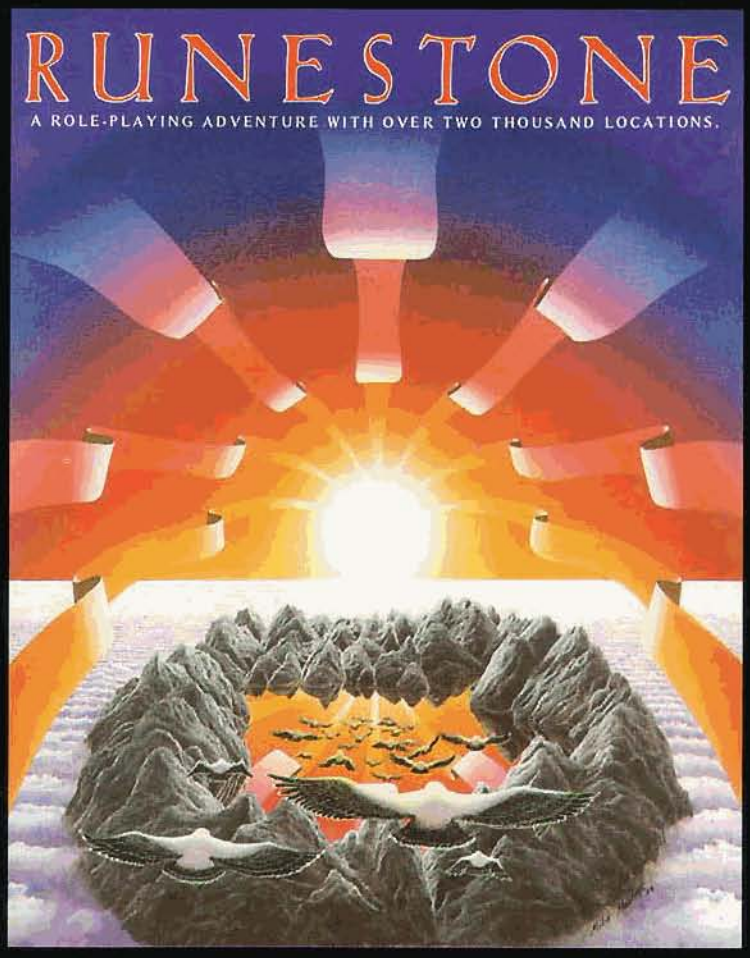
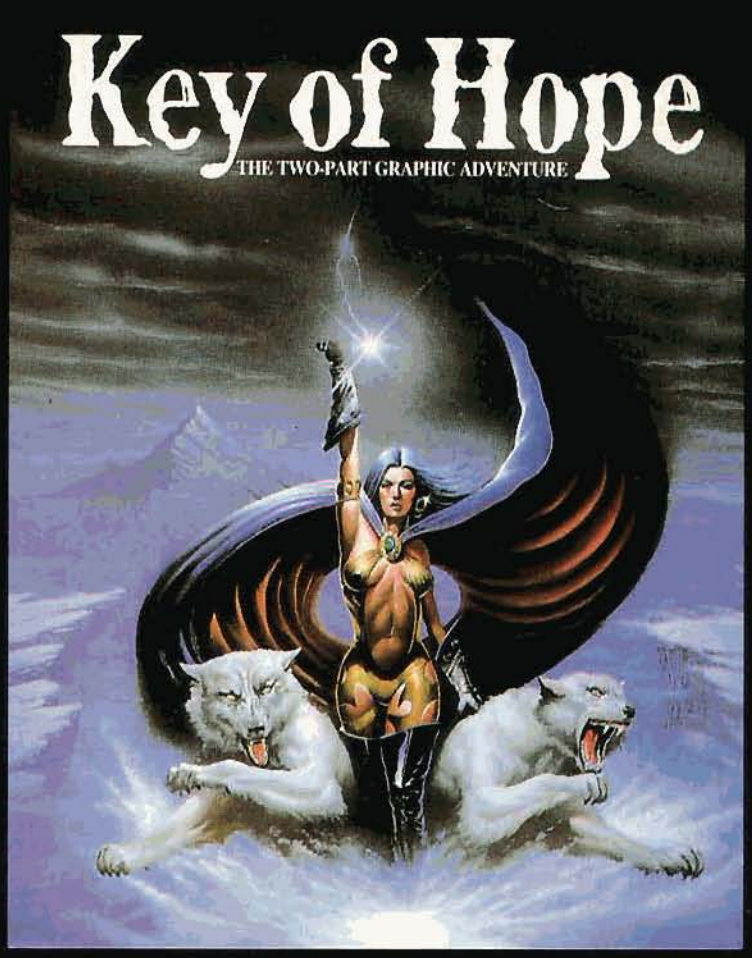
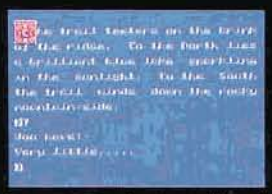


**RUNESTONE** is the first adventure game to feature the new VENTURESCOPE programming technique - real time action, full text interpreter, multiple command input, dozens of independent characters AND thousands of different views! At last a real role-playing adventure with graphics to match. You control three heroes in their epic quest to find the Runestone of Zaphir and crush Kordomir the dark... The adventure guide contains fragments of the book of Zarimir, the full prologue to the Book of Morval, and a map of Belorn. *48K Spectrum £7.95*



**KEY OF HOPE** is a purist's adventure distilled to perfection. Over four hundred locations full of deadly enemies and mind wrenching problems - superb atmosphere is created by illuminated manuscript text and full-screen graphics. The White Goddess has summoned you, Warrior-Mage of Castle Argent, to her aid; catapulted through time to an unfamiliar land, you must seek the far-flung pieces of the Key of Hope, the last defence against the shadow of Malnor... *48K Spectrum £7.95*

**Selected titles available from WHSMITH Boots WOOLWORTH and all good computer shops.**
**RUNESTONE and KEY OF HOPE are also avaiable on microdrive cartridge, price £8.95 from Games Workshop Mail Order, 27-29 Sunbeam Rd., London NW10 6JP. Cheques/POs payable to Games Workshop Ltd. P&P free in the U.K., add 15% for overseas.**

## GAMES WORKSHOP

**TOWER of DESPAIR**
**48K Spectrum £7.95**
**Commodore 64 £8.95**
**BBC B £8.95**
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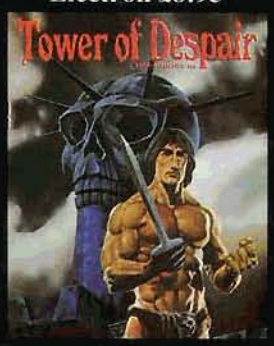
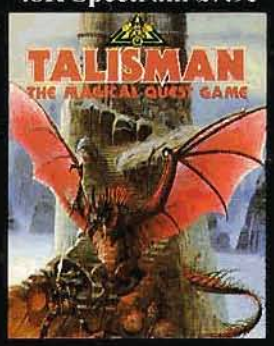
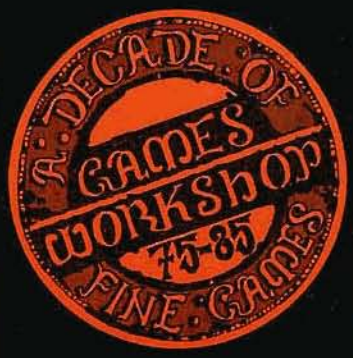
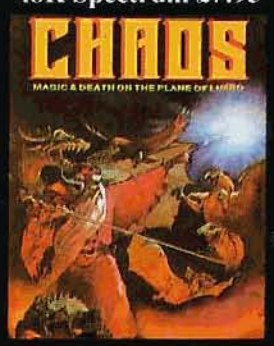



**TALISMAN**
**48K Spectrum £7.95**

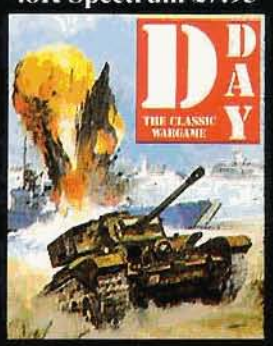



**CHAOS**
**48K Spectrum £7.95**




**D-DAY**
**QL £24.95**
**Commodore 64 £8.95**
**48K Spectrum £7.95**



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